

*By Dr Freeman.  
K. Ch. hist.*

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# DISCOURSE

Concerning

INVOCATION

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SAINTS.

Rom. io. 14.

*How shall they call upon him in whom  
they have not believed?*

*by Sam. Freeman D.D.*

LONDON:

Printed for Ben. Tooke at the Ship in St. Paul's  
Church-Yard, and F. Gardiner at the  
White-Horse in Ludgate-Street.

MDCCLXXXIV.

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1. A discourse concerning Invocation of Saints.
2. Of Divine Service in an unknown tongue.
3. Of Auricular Confession.
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12. A 2<sup>d</sup> letter from the author of a discourse concerning extreme unction to the Vicar of the Bp. of London.

13 N.W.C.

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1870

*By D. Freeman.  
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Printed for the  
Church of England  
and the Society for  
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in the Strand



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# DISCOURSE

Concerning

## INVOCATION of SAINTS.

**A**Mongst many other very corrupt and erroneous Doctrines of the *Romanists*, the Church of *England* in her twenty second Article condemns that of *Invocation of Saints*, as a *fond thing*, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God; and in her Learned Homily against the Peril of Idolatry passes yet a much severer Censure upon it, and makes all those that believe and practise it, *Guilty of the same Idolatry that was amongst Hebrews and Gentiles*. How sharp soever this charge may be thought to be, 'tis, you see, the plain sense and judgment of our Church, and what I believe is the Truth, and no hard matter to make good.

To proceed therefore in the easiest and clearest method I can, I propose to sum up all that I think needful to be said upon it under these following heads:

1. *What's the profest Doctrine and Practice of the Church of Rome, as to Invocation of Saints?*
2. *On what occasion it began and spread in the Church?*
3. *That there is not the least proof for it from Scripture.*
4. *That there is no proof for it from the Fathers of the first three hundred years, and more.*
5. *That there is full and evident proof in Scripture against it.*

6. *That the Fathers of the first and purest Ages, till after three hundred, are all expresse and positive in their writings against it.*

7. *That the Doctrine and Practice of Saint-Invocation is Impious and Idolatrous.*

I. *What's the profest Doctrine and Practice of the Church of Rome, as to Invocation of Saints?*

**A**N Account of this I shall give you first in general, as it is set down in the Decree of the *Trent-Council*, and then lay it before you more at large, distributed under several particulars.

In the twenty fifth Session of that pack'd Synod, we have its Decree in these Words: *That all Bishops and Pastors that have the Cure of Souls, do diligently instruct their Flock, that it is Good and Profitable, Humbly to Pray unto the Saints, and to have recourse to their Prayers, Help and Aid:* And then to reinforce the Obligation of it, it denounces an Anathema against all those who shall find fault with it, or refuse to practise it. So that now who-soever shall be so hardy as to think and teach the contrary, to say, *that either it ought not to be done, or that it's a foolish thing to do it; that the practice is little less than Idolatry, repugnant to the Doctrine of the Scriptures, hugely derogatory to the Glory of God as sole Governour of the World, and highly injurious to the Honour of Christ as the only Mediatour betwixt God and Man, does, in the judgment of that Church, think impiously;* and if the Pope's Power as well as his Infallibility does not fail him, he must be Curst and Damn'd for it. But, for once, not to be frighted with this vain Thunder, I shall proceed in due place, by God's assistance, to prove all the

fore-

foregoing particulars against it, when I have given you yet a fuller description of it. First then,

1. The least and most excusable thing in this Doctrine and Practice is, to Pray to Saints to Pray for them. Thus much is not onely confest by them, but made the pretence to bring off this Doctrine without the Charge of Idolatry and Creature-Worship: We do no more in Praying to Saints departed, say they, than one living Christian does to another, when he says, Pray Sir, Pray for me, or remember me in your Prayers. But, was this indeed the true meaning of such Devotions, it's so far from being any justification of them, that the Apology it self is sinful, and admitting the excuse, the Practice no less to be condemned. For,

When they Pray to Saints departed to Pray for them, those Saints do either hear their Prayers and become acquainted with their desires, or they do not; If they do hear all those Prayers that are put up to them at the same time by innumerable persons, and that in far distant places, what's this but to ascribe to them that Ubiquity and Omnipresence, that's solely, peculiarly, and incommunicably in God? If they do not, then it's very absurd and ridiculous, and a great abuse of that reason God hath given men for other ends than to trifle with, to Pray to them. For, to what purpose should they Pray to them that can't hear them? Why should they beseech those to be their Advocates to God, and recommend their particular cases to Him, whose cases they cannot, by any way that we know of, come to understand? As for their learning and seeing all things in the Glass of the Trinity, or learning them by particular revelation from God; as God has declared no such thing to us, so is it not to be known by the Light of Nature, but the contrary is very probable, if not certain; as shall be made to appear in the sequel



sequel of this Discourse. It is not denied but that blessed Spirits who are safely landed upon the Shore, do Pray for their Partners who are still behind beating it on the Waves; it is not denied but that Saints in Heaven may pray in particular to God for their Friends and Relations, whose necessities and infirmities they were well acquainted with before they left the Body: so 'twas agreed betwixt St. *Cyprian* and *Cornelius*, that who went first to Glory, should be mindful of the others condition to God; for, why should their Memories or their Charity be thought to be less in Heaven than they were on Earth? We know 'twas the practice of some good Men in the Primitive times to recommend themselves to the Prayers of the Saints, that is, to desire God to hear the Prayers that the Saints in Heaven did make in their behalf; and to apply themselves to the Martyrs a little before their suffering, when they themselves were entred into bliss, to interceed with God for those who were yet on the way passing thither with fear and trembling. But now is there no difference betwixt the Saints intercessions for us and our Invocation of them? betwixt their Praying for us in Heaven, and our Praying to them on Earth? Is there no difference betwixt one living Christian Praying to another to Pray for him, who hears his request, and who is acquainted with his condition, and our addressing to Saints departed, to Pray for us, who know us not, and who are ignorant of our state?

Again, when they pray to Saints departed, they do it with all the Rites and Solemnities of a Religious Worship, in Sacred Offices, upon their Knees, with uncovered Heads, with Hands and Eyes lifted up, in times and places dedicated to God's Worship; now, though it should be true, that they do no more than pray to Saints to pray for them, yet doing it in that manner, with such External Acts of Devotion that are confest to be the same where-  
with



with we call on God, I do not see, how they can be excused, even on this account, from attributing that honour to the Creature, which is due onely to the Creator. As God is owned to be infinite in himself, and to have incommunicable Perfections, so there ought to be some peculiar and appropriate Acts and Signs of Worship to signify that we do inwardly so esteem and believe of God; and when these are once determined by the Law of God, or the universal reason and consent of Mankind, the applying them to any else but him, is a plain violating his Peculiarities, and robbing him of his Honour. And now in this respect also, I cannot discern how the *Romish* Invocation of Saints is of the same nature with our Requesting our Fellow-Members to Pray for us? For (not to mention again the presence of these, and the absence of the other) is there no difference betwixt my desiring an eminently good Christian to pray for me, and falling down on my knees with Hands and Eyes lifted up, and that in a Temple, to him, with that request? Would not every good man that has any regard for the Honour of God, presently shew his detestation of such an action? Would he not say to me, as *St. Peter* to *Cornelius* falling down before him, *Stand up, I my self also am a man?* Would he not with *St. Paul* have rent his Garments, and with much holy indignation cryed out to me, as he to the men of *Lystra*, designing the same Honours to him and *Barnabas*, wherewith they Worship'd their Gods, *Why do ye these things, we also are men of like passions with you?* As the Saints in Heaven cannot be supposed to lose any thing of their Love and Charity towards their Fellow-Members by going thither, so neither can they be thought to abate any thing of their zeal and fervour for the Honour of God, and therefore certainly what they did and would have refused here on Earth, they must with higher degrees of abhorrence reject now they are in Heaven.

More-

Moreover, if this be all they mean by all their several Offices of Devotions to Saints departed, that they should pray for them unto God, why in all this time that these forms have been complained of, has not the sense of them been better exprest? Whence, I pray, should we take the meaning of such Prayers but from the usual signification of the Words? But, if not; why has no Inquisition past upon them? Why have not the grossest and rankest for Superstition and encroaching on the Prerogative of God, been expunged and blotted out? Why all this while has there been no review, no comments upon them, no cautions and instructions written and bound up with their Breviaries, Rosaries and Hours, that the People might know how to understand them? If the form of words in their Saint-Invocation be the same that is used to God, but their sence and meaning otherwise, why don't they tell this to the World, and make their Explication as publick and as general as the Prayers?

Certainly the Bishops and Governours of the *Romish* Church, and those that have the Care of Souls amongst them, are either guilty of gross and wilful Neglects to the People, or else, whatever they say to us, their will is, that the People should understand those Prayers according to the customary and received use of the words; and then I am sure they pray, not only to Saints to pray for them unto God, in order to the obtaining of him such aids and supplies they want, but to Saints themselves for those very blessings. As will appear at large in the next particular.

2. They pray to Saints departed for those very blessings that none but God can give. To what purpose else do they advise us to fly, not onely to their Prayers, but *their help and assistance*; which words, *help and assistance*, would have been altogether superfluous, was not something else meant by them, than onely *that* of their Prayers.

*Open auxili-  
umq; Trid.  
Con. Sess. 25.*

To what purpose else do they pray to them to *visit* Propere veni,  
accletera. them, to make haste and come to them, did they not expect some other aid and assistance from them, than bare praying for them? For that certainly might have been better and more conveniently performed in Heaven, before the Face of God.

To what purpose else in some particular cases do they put up their Addresses to one Saint rather than to another, according as in this World they were famous, either for some eminent Grace shining in them, or for some strange Cure or extraordinary Deliverance wrought by them, but onely, that they believe and trust, that those who did such great things on Earth, are much more willing and able to do them now they are in Heaven, where, while other Graces cease, Charity and Beneficence are perfected, and abide for ever?

Thus because St. *Roch* was signally Charitable in assisting those who were infected with the Plague, therefore do they call upon him in times of Infection; because St. *Apollonia* had all her Teeth struck out for her undaunted Confession of the Faith of Jesus, therefore do they fly to her for ease against the Rage of Teeth; because St. *George* was by Profession a Souldier, and renown'd for wonderful Atchievements, therefore have they recourse to him for Assistance against Enemies. 'Tis true, was it lawful to Address to any at all, this might be a sufficient reason, why they Address to this rather than to another Saint, because his or her former actions or sufferings do best suit and besit their present case; but, being not sure that these and such like Canonized Saints of the *Romish* Church, are Saints in Heaven, being sure, if they are, they can't hear us, nor know our particular State, much less bestow health and deliverance upon us; whilst we Love and Honour the Memory of Saints indeed, we ought to call onely upon  

B
God,



God, who onely is a present help in time of need, and the Saviour of them that put their trust in him.

But to put this out of doubt, it will not be amiss to set down some of their Forms of Devotion to Saints departed: And here, not to rake for them in some obscure Authors that have privately stole into the World, I shall need go no farther than the present *Roman Breviary*, Corrected and Published by the Decree and Order of the Council of *Trent*. The Blessed Virgin is there Invoked in the Feast of the Assumption, *For strength against Enemies*; and in the Hymn frequently used in her Office, she is not only called the *Gate of Heaven*, but intreated to loose the bonds of the Guilty, to

*\* O felix puerpera nostra pi-  
ans scelera, jure  
matris impera  
Redemptori.*  
*Dall. de cultu  
Latin. lib 3 cap  
4. p. 359. Not  
denied by Na-  
talis Alexan.  
though he an-  
swers this Cita-  
tion of Dalle,  
only says, Non  
est ab ecclesia  
probata & qui-  
busdam tantum  
missalibus olim  
inserta est.*  
*Hist. Eccl. Sec.  
5. dissert. 5. p.  
343. 347.*  
*† Biel. in Can.  
mis. Sect. 80.*  
*|| Salmeron in  
Tim. 1. 2. dis. 8.*  
*\* Carol. Scrib.  
in Amph. bon.  
Commun. p. 29.*  
*chemn. exemp.  
Invocat. Sanct.  
p. 146.*

give light to the Blind; to drive away our evils, to obtain good things for us, and to shew her self to be a Mother; (that is, as the Mass-Book of Paris, 1634, interprets it) *\* in right of a Mother to command her Son*. In another place she is sued to for help to the Miserable, for strength to the Weak, for comfort to the Afflicted, and that all that Celebrate her Festivals may feel her Assistance: And but that I said I would not hunt for matter, I could send you to Authors of theirs, and not of the least note, where we may read such Blasphemy as this: † *That God hath given the Virgin Mary half of his Kingdom*. || *That the Prayers made to, and by the Saints, are better than those made by Christ*. \* *That the Mother's Milk is equally to be esteem'd with the Son's Blood*. This you may take for a tast of that *Hyperdulia*, that super-refin'd Service which they put up to the Blessed Virgin; and yet that to the Apostles and other Saints of less Magnitude comes not much behind it: St. Peter is intreated by the Power given to him, *To bear their Prayers, to unty the bonds of their Iniquity, and to open the Gates of Heaven*: all the Apostles, *to Absolve them from their Sins by their command, to Heal all their Spi-ritual*



*ritual Maladies, and to increase their Virtues. St. Andrew is supplicated for Patience to bear chearfully the Cross of Christ; St. Francis, for Deliverance from the drudgery and bondage of Sin; St. Brigit, for Wisdom against the Snares of the World; St. Nicholas, for Courage against the assaults of the Devil; St. Agnes, for the chiefest of Graces, that of Charity; and St. Catharine, for all Graces: We are taught to Pray to be delivered from Hell, and to be made Partakers of Heaven by their Merits; to fly* Breviar. & miss. *to them as our Patrons and Advocates, to put confidence in their Intercessions, and to ascribe our Mercies and deliverances to their Power and Interest in God. In the Office of Visitation of the Sick, the Priest laying his right hand upon the head of the sick Person, Prays, That Jesus the Son of Mary, and Saviour of the World,* Ritual de Visit. Infirm. *would for the Merits and Intercession of his Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and all Saints, be Gracious and Merciful to him: And in another place in the same Office, That through the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin, and all Saints, he might obtain Eternal Life. These are enough, but I cannot omit one more, which is a Flower indeed; in the Office about the Sacrament of Penance, there is found this remarkable Prayer: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary,* Ritual. Rom. de Sacram. pœnit. *and of all Saints, and whatsoever Good thou hast done, and whatsoever Evil thou hast suffered, be to thee for the Remission of Sins, the Encrease of Grace, and the Reward of Eternal Life. And now let the Reader judge, if this be not to give the Creature that Worship that's due only to the Creator, and to seek to obtain those Blessings from finite Beings, and through their procurement, which only Almighty God, and his Blessed Son Christ Jesus, can give unto Men.*

3. 'Tis the Doctrine of the Church of Rome, that Mental Prayers, as well as Vocal, are to be put up to

Voce vel mente  
Supplicare.

Saints departed; So the *Trent-Council* decreed, so their Bishops and Pastors are enjoyned to teach the People, and so they practise, this being a form of Prayer to Saints in frequent use amongst them, *With the desire of our Hearts we Pray unto you, regard the ready Service of our Minds.* So that according to them, Saints departed do not only hear our Prayers, but know our Hearts also; and indeed this is necessarily implied in every Prayer that's made to them, viz. that they not onely hear the Prayer, but know the disposition of the Heart from whence it proceeds, otherwise the Hypocritical Suppliant must be supposed, as likely to obtain their favour, as the Sincerest Votary.

4. They not only Pray to them with Mental and Vocal Prayer, but

Ordinar. missæ. p. 217. They confess their Sins to them. Very remarkable is that Form of Confession in the Reformed Roman Missal, *I confess to Almighty God, to the ever Blessed Virgin, to Blessed Michael, Arch-Angel, to Blessed John Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the Saints, and to you, Brethren, that I have Sinned in thought, word and deed.*

Francis Alber- tin. de Angel. Custod. p. 224. They make Vows to them; nothing is more common then, at entrance into some Religious Orders, thus to express their Devotion: *I Vow to God and the Blessed Virgin*; then to Vow that their whole life shall be devoted to the Blessed Virgin, or some other Saint, according to that famous pattern, *I humbly beg of thee, O Mother of all Clemency, that thou wouldest vouchsafe to admit me into the number of those who have devoted themselves to thee, to be thy perpetual Servants.* Another of this kind, not much inferiour to it, we meet with in *Horstius*, viz. *I firmly resolve henceforth to serve thee and thy Son with all faithfulness, and for ever to cleave to thee.*

Horst. in dedic. sect. 2. p. 83.

They offer up Laud and Praise to them, and intreat them

them to hear and receive their Thanksgivings; thus to St. James they pray *that he would joyfully hear the acknowledgments that as right and due they paid to him.* 'Tis usual with their learned men to conclude their Books with *Praise to God and the Blessed Virgin*, particularly *Valentia* and *Bellarmino*, the latter of which thus ends his Book concerning the Worship of Saints: *Praise be to God, and to the Blessed Virgin, also to Jesus Christ.* Horstius before had it, *thee and thy Son*; Bellarmine here, *the Blessed Virgin, and then Jesus Christ*: whereby we may see they give her not only an equal part with God in their Praises, but by placing her before Christ, seem to give her somewhat of Pre-eminence above him.

*Brev. Rom. in  
fest. S. Jacob.*

*Bellar. de cul.  
Sanct. Lyon  
Edit.*

*Laus deo vir-  
giniq; Mariae,  
Jesu item Chri-  
sto.*

5. They appoint Angels and Saints, Deputies and Lieutenants under God in the Government of the World, and stick not to make them Guardians, Patrons and Patronesses over particular Kingdoms, Cities, Churches, and single Persons. The Scripture indeed frequently speaks of the Knowledge, Presence, Dignity, occasional Ministry, and Embassies of holy Angels, but that delegation of power the *Romanists* give them, whereby they make them share Empire and Dominion with God in the Government of the World, can be as little prov'd of them, as of Saints departed: however, I am chiefly to consider their Doctrine and Practice in reference to the latter; they teach the People to make choice of one or more out of the number of the Saints to be their Patron, to love them, to imitate them, through their hands to offer daily their works to God, to commend themselves to their protection at all times, especially in Difficulties and Temptations; they give to one Saint this Precinct, and to another, that; to one, power over this Malady; over that, to others. More of this you have drawn to the life in the fore-mentioned excellent Homily of our Church against Idolatry, out of which

*Horst. parad.  
Anima fest. 2.*

*Homil. of Idolat.  
lat.*



which I shall only cull some Passages, and refer the Reader, for farther satisfaction, to the Homily it self: It compares such Saints in the Roman Church, to whom they allot the defence of certain Countries, to the Dii Tutelares of the Gentile Idolaters; such, to whom the safety of certain Cities are committed, to their Dii Presides; and such, to whom Temples and Churches are builded, and Altars erected, to their Dii Patroni; it tells us that the Romanists have no fewer Saints, than the Heathens had Gods, to whom they give the Honour due to God; every Artificer and Profession has his special Saint as a peculiar God: for example, Scholars have St. Nicholas and St. Gregory; Painters, St. Luke; neither lack Souldiers their Mars; nor Lovers their Venus amongst Christians, The Sea and Waters, amongst the Romanists, as well as Cities and Countries, have their special Saints to preside over them, as amongst the Heathens they had Gods: All Diseases have their special Saints as Gods, the Curers of them; the Pox, St. Roch; the Falling-Evil, St. Cornelis; the Toothach, St. Apollonia: Neither do Beasts and Cattle lack their Gods with us; for St. Loy is the Horsleach, and St. Anthony the Swineherd, &c. Where is God's Providence and due Honour in the mean time? who saith, The Heavens be mine, the Earth is mine, the whole World and all that therein is: but we have left him neither Heaven, nor Earth, nor Water, nor Country, nor City, Peace nor War, to Rule and Govern; neither Men nor Beasts, nor their Diseases to cure: And, as if we doubted of his ability or will to help, we joyn to him another Helper, as if he were a Noun Adjective, using these Sayings; such as Learn, God and St. Nicholas be my speed; such as Neese, God help and St. John; to the Horse, God and St. Loy save thee. Thus are we become like Horses and Mules, that have no understanding. Oh Heavens! Oh Earth! What Madnes and Wickednes against God, are Men fallen into?

What



*What dishonour do the Creatures to their Creator and Maker? This is not written to reproach the Saints, but to condemn the Foolishness and Wickedness of Men, who make of the true Servants of God, false Gods, by attributing to them the Power and Honour which is Gods, and due to him only.*

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## II. *On what occasion this Doctrine and Practice began and spread in the Church?*

**G**REAT was the Honour the Primitive Christians had for their Martyrs and Confessors; they frequented their Tombs, erected Altars on the places of their burial, highly esteemed their Bones and Reliques; here they rehearsed their good works done in their lifetime, and their Faith, Patience, and Constancy shewed at Death; here they blessed God for that Grace that was given them, and for that good that accrued to themselves by their example; here they proposed their Virtues for imitation, and had their own Piety and Zeal enflamed by the remembrance of them: and the Christian Cause being then harassed on every side by implacable Enemies, the Malice of the Jew, and the Subtilty of the Greek, and the Power of the Roman combining with their united force to destroy and root it up, it pleased God, not only by the demonstration of a Divine power in the Apostles and their immediate Successors, whilst they were alive, but also by many wonderful things done at their Tombs when they were dead, and by sensibly answering Prayers that were there put up to him, to confirm the Truth of Christianity, to declare his approbation of the sufferings of his Servants, and to encourage others to Seal the Doctrine of the Gospel with their Blood as they had done. To them in a particular manner

Rom. 8. 29, 30.

Ver. 28.

manner may that of the Apostle be applied, *Whom God did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate, them he called; and whom he called, them he justified; and whom he justified, them he glorified.* The Apostle having said in the verse before, *We know that all things work together for good unto them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose;* adds, as a proof of what he had said, *whom he did foreknow,* would be persons of Great and Noble minds, and so fit for the work, *them he did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son,* them he did decree to suffer for his sake, and by sufferings to be made conformed to his Son, who was made perfect through sufferings; *and whom he did predestinate, them he also called,* them in due time he actually called forth to suffer for his Name; *and whom he called, them he justified,* them he approved of as faithful Servants, as loyal Souldiers, as invincible Champions of Truth and Righteousness; *and whom he justified, them he glorified,* them he crowned with Honour and Renown here, and with immortal Glory hereafter. This was the Testimony God bore to the Apostles and first Bishops of the Church, to the Authority they had received, to the Doctrine they taught, and for which they died; this was the Honour the Primitive Christians deservedly shewed to their victorious Martyrs; they did not Invoke them, but Loved their Memories, Commemorated their Virtues, and Blessed God for their Example; they performed to them not any part of Religious Worship that was due to God only, but (as they called it) *an officious Worship, a Worship of Love and Society, a special and particular observance, a respect convenient and proper,* and which they could not but think was due to them on the account of the great service they had done to the Cause of Christ, and the more than ordinary worth and excellency that shined in them. But

*Cultus officio-  
sus dilectionis,  
& societatis,  
specialis obser-  
vantia. S. Aust.  
Contr. Faust.  
lib. 20. 21.  
ὁ λαμπρυνόμενος  
ἀλλὰ ὑποτασσόμενος  
τῇ κυριακῇ.  
Cyril. l. 6. contr.  
Jul.*

But afterwards in succeeding Ages, when through the good Providence of God, and Favour of *Constantine the Great*, the Church had rest and ease, and Prosperity began to dawn upon it, the Devil finding he could not prevail over the Christian Faith by fiery trials and temptations, betook himself to other, more secret it may be, but equally dangerous stratagems; and by working on the strong inclinations and affections of men to ease and softness, he too successfully attempted to deprave and corrupt it by loose and superstitious Doctrines: most men are for some kind of Religion whether the Devil will or no, which, because he cannot hinder, he labours what he can, it may be such, that whilst it pretends fair, may do them but little good; and men are forward enough to close with that which offers, at carrying them to Heaven, on the easiest terms. The Church being now out of Persecution, and Riches and Honours attending that Profession, for which such Multitudes had lost all, and endured the Flames, the People began to be more loose and vain in their conversations, than when they still expected Martyrdom: now they began to place their Religion in shews and pretences more than in a sincere and substantial Piety; and whereas before they were wont to frequent the Tombs of the Martyrs, that at the sight of the place their Affections might be raised, their Devotions enlivened, and their Faith and Charity receive farther degrees of warmth and heat from their burning and shining Examples; now they placed all their Religion in the bare outward observance of that Solemnity, and took more care to honour the Saints by their lofty Praises and Commendations of them, than to become Saints themselves by imitating their Graces and Virtues; and that, what was wanting in the one, they might make up in the other, they now began to fall into many superstitious Conceits and Opinions concerning them, to



break out into too lavish, and indeed extravagant expressions of their worth, and to fly too high in their Pannegyrics and Laudatory Orations: Now they began

To attribute the Miracles done at the Martyrs Tombs, to the Martyrs own Power, or at least Mediation with God. The common People observing, that many Cures were wrought upon those, that at those Monuments applied themselves to God, were led by degrees to look upon them as so many Testimonies of the Martyrs great Interest in the Court of Heaven, and instead of begging relief of God, to speak directly to the Martyrs themselves:

To fancy that the Souls of Martyrs were always hovering about their Tombs and Ashes, and so joyned their Intercessions with the Prayers of Christians that were put up to God in those places; so 'twas objected by *Vigilantius* to *St. Hierom*:

Oret pro nobis  
Flavianus.

To wish that the Martyrs would Pray for them: so they cried out in the Council of *Chalcedon*, *Let Flavianus Pray for us*: and in *Theodore's* History of the Lives of the Fathers, we find in the close of most of them, (tho' some think them not to be his words, but Additions and Insertions afterwards: ) *I wish and desire that by their Intercession I may obtain Divine help.*

Commendare  
nos orationi,  
St. Aust.

To commend themselves to the Martyrs Intercessions, to beg to be heard for their sakes, to be helpt by their Prayers, to be vouchsaf the effects of the Prayers that were made by them, in behalf of the Church below:

ἡμεῖς αἰδοῦμεν.  
Nazian. Orat.  
3. in Julian.  
οὐδὲν ἡμῶν  
ἐστὶν ἡμῶν  
ὁρᾶν.  
Orat. und. in  
Gargon.

To Pray to them upon supposition, if they heard or knew what was done here below: *Hear, oh thou Soul of Great Constantius!* says *St. Gregory Nazianzen*, *if thou hast any understanding of these things.* The like he hath in his Funeral Oration which he made upon his Sister *Gorgonia*: *If thou hast any care of things done by us, and Holy Souls, receive this Honour from God that they have*  
any

any feeling of such things as these, receive this Oration of ours.

By such steps and degrees as these, the frequenting the places where the Martyrs were enshrined, and honouring their Names and Memories, was turned into superstitious Devotion, and that soon ended in solemn and down-right Invocation.

To all this we may add, what a Learned Author of Dr. Tenison. our own has ingeniously guess, that the great compliance and yielding of the *Roman* Christians in this particular to those Northern Nations, the *Goths* and *Vandals*, when they invaded and over-run the Empire, did not a little contribute to raise and propagate this Saint-Worship and Invocation in the Church; of all the Heathen Nations none were more Zealously Devoted to the Worship of *Dæmons*, than those were, whereof he gives many Testimonies; now it's not improbable that the Christians, to mollifie their fierce natures, and to induce them the more readily to embrace Christianity, might indulge them still that Practice, excepting onely the Object of their Worship, giving them real Saints and Holy Angels instead of their feigned and impure Deities; and that which makes this the more probable is, that their Invasion and stay in *Italy*, and the rise and growth of *Dæmon*-Worship there, jump exactly as to time, and both bear Date from the Fourth and Fifth Centuries.

### III. That there is not the least proof for it from Scripture.

I. **A**Nd here we are first to take notice, that it is freely confest by some of their own Learned Divines, that there is no expresse Text, either in the Old or New Testament, for this Doctrine and Practice; And is it not hard to make that an Article of Faith, that

*Bell. de Sanct. beat. c. 19. Sal. in 1 Tim. 2. disp. 7. Eckius Enchir. de vener. San. c. 15. Cardin. du Perron.*

2 Tim. 3. 15,  
16.

John 20. 30.

1 Cor. 14.

Catch. Rom.  
584.

Jam. 5. 14.

has no foundation to stand on in the word of God? or to make that a Duty, that has no Law nor Sanction to bind us to the Practice of it? Were not the Scriptures written *to make men wise unto Salvation, and to instruct them thoroughly unto all good works?* Were they not written that *we might believe, and believing might have eternal life?* Do not the Apostles say, *they have made known to Men the whole will of God, and kept nothing hid from them?* Do they not abound in earnest Exhortations to pray, to pray always, to pray without ceasing, with all Prayer? Have they not left frequent Directions for the right performance of it, in a Language that all that hear may understand, with pure hands, in Faith, without wrath and doubting? And now can we imagine after all this, that, had Invocation of Saints been so good and profitable a Duty, or that it had been so great a Crime, so much as to doubt of the Blessed Virgin's Merits and Ability to help, that they would have been wholly silent as to this matter? Were not the Apostles guided by the Holy Spirit of God? Must they not be supposed to have as hearty a concern, and as burning a zeal for the Salvation of Souls, and the Glory of God, as the *Trent* Fathers had? And now, had this Practice been so highly instrumental to promote both these, as that Synod would have us believe, is it to be imagined that every one of them would have quite forgot it, and neglected to have given it in charge with as much strictness, as they have done to all Bishops and Pastors, to instruct their Flocks in the Piety and Usefulness of it? Have not the Apostles both by their Precept and Example enjoined Christians to beg the Prayers of one another, whilst they are in the Body? Have they not prescribed the sick man, as the most Sovereign Receipt, to have recourse to the Prayers of the Elders of the Church? What reason then can be given, that we have not any one Example or Precept to fly to the Prayers of Saints de-



departed, to their help and assistance, as the more prevailing and meritorious, but only this, that they are not in a capacity to hear our Requests, or to know our Conditions? Nay, had our Saviour and his Apostles intended this Saint-Invocation as a necessary Christian Duty, it would have needed a more express command and penalty to have enforced its obligation, than most other Duties of Christianity, since it was altogether a thing new to the *Jews*, and what had never been practised by them: for though sometimes in their Prayers to God, they besought him to remember *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, that is, *his own covenant and promise* he had made with and to them; yet they never used them as Intercessors, or said, *Holy Abraham, or Holy Isaac, Pray for us.* Luk. 1. 55, 72.  
73.  
Dent. 7. 8.

But to blunt the edge of this Argument that they themselves have put into our hands against it, they tell us, 'twas not for any intrinsic Evil in the thing, but for some particular reasons relating to the times of the Old Testament, and the first Ages of the New, that it was not mentioned and enjoined in Scripture; but if the Reasons produced by them do hold with equal force against it promiscuously in all Ages, as well as against it, then certainly the main reason why it's no-where prescribed in Scripture, is, that it might at no time be put in practice. The Reasons they give are chiefly two.

For the Old Testament, they say it's not there enjoined, because the Patriarchs and Saints departed, during that dispensation, were not admitted into the Beatifick Vision, and so could not ordinarily understand the Prayers of the Living; but, if for ought we know, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, are still in the same Limbo, or place of Rest they went to at first, or if our Saviour at his ascension into Heaven did give them a happy deliverance, and took them up with him into the immediate

diate presence of God, it's not certain, that they understand the desires of the Living any more than they did before, then there is as much reason not to Invoke them now, as there was not to do it then. Many of the *Romanists* will not have the Saints in Heaven come to know the desires of their Living Votaries by the benefit of the Beatifick Vision which they enjoy, but by particular Revelation from God ; and if so, then the Old Testament-Worthies were as capable of it, and consequently there was as much reason to Pray unto them before our Saviour's coming, when they were but in Paradise, as afterwards when by his glorious Victory and Triumph over Death they were exalted into Heaven, since God could have revealed the requests of their Supplicants alike to them in all places, in one as well as another : besides, considering the great esteem and veneration the *Jews* ever had for those great Men, the Founders of their Nation, *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua*, and others, had there been no evil in the thing, no reason can be given why it was not preached to the *Jews* by our Saviour and his Apostles, as the most likely Argument to win them to embrace the Christian Religion.

For the New Testament, they say, 'tis not there enjoined, because it would have been a great offence and scandal to the new-converted Gentiles, and have given them an occasion to think, that they had only changed their Gods, but not their Religion ; that the Christian Doctrine was only a device of the Apostles to thrust out their old *Demons* and *Heroes*, and to put in themselves ; that as those had hitherto been Worshipt for the great services and benefactions they did in this present World, so they for the future might have the same Honour done them for the full discoveries they had made, and excellent directions they had given, relating to a future and more happy State.

And

And is not this a good Argument, and does it not hold still against *Romish* Invocation? Is it not of as much force now to cast it out of the Church, as it was then not to bring it in? Does it not give infinite offence to a great part of the Christian World, and is it not esteem'd, and that justly, by them to be the old Pagan-Worship revived, or something very near it? For it is not enough to excuse them from it, that the object of their Invocation is not the same, that they do not with them pay this Worship to the Heathen Deities, (who, though in some respects they had been Patrons and Benefactors to their Country, were yet in others very lewd and unworthy persons) but to the Apostles of Christ and Christian Martyrs, (who in all respects were highly deserving of the World) whilst they agree in the same act and kind of Worship, and give that Honour to the Creature, which properly and peculiarly belongs to God; and herein especially did the Pagan Worship and Superstition consist.

2. We shall now examine the chief of those Texts the *Romanists* produce in the behalf of this Doctrine, and let you see how little they serve to that purpose.

The first is, *Luke 15. 7, 10. There shall be joy in Heaven: and again, There shall be joy before the Angels of God, over one Sinner that repenteth.* From whence they argue, that if Angels and Blessed Spirits rejoyce at the Conversion of a Sinner, they must know and understand this change that's wrought in them, before they can rejoyce at it; and if the knowledge of their repentance reaches them, why not also of their Prayers? And then if they can hear their Prayers, why may they not be prayed unto? To this it's answered,

That this rejoycing in Heaven is not for the Conversion of a particular Sinner, but in general for the Redemption of Mankind by Jesus Christ; and this appears.



appears more than probable from the parable of the lost Sheep immediately going before, whereof these words are the conclusion; the Ninety nine Sheep not lost, are the Angels persevering in their first State of Innocency; the Sheep that went astray, *Adam*, and in him all his Posterity that fell from God; the Shepherd that went to seek the lost Sheep, God himself, who sent his Son into the World to seek and to save that which is lost, on whose shoulders the great Work of Mans Redemption was laid; and for this we are sure, there was joy in Heaven, when a Blessed Chorus of Angels sung that Heavenly Anthem at Christ's Nativity, *Glory be to God on high, and on Earth Peace, good will towards Men.* But

Ἐνός ποτε τῶν  
αγγέλων.

Supposing this rejoicing is to be understood for the Repentance of individual Sinners, it may be observed, that this joy is not said to be the joy of Angels, but *before the Angels*; intimating that this rejoicing is not to be attributed to the Angels, but to God in whose presence they stand, and this Exposition is countenanced by considering that it's God that answers to the Shepherd in the Parable; as he went to seek his strayed Sheep, and rejoiced at the finding of it, so it's God that by his Grace and Mercy in Christ, recovered Man, and rejoiced at the accomplishment of his own Work. Again,

If this Text does imply, that Angels in Heaven know when a Sinner is converted, and rejoice at it, it does not follow that they know this by some excellent privilege and perfection of their Nature, whereby also they are enabled to understand even those Mental Prayers, that we are told ought to be put up to them; but passing always betwixt Heaven and Earth, (as was represented unto *Jacob* in his Divine Vision on God's Errands and Embassies) those that ascend from Earth may tell

tell the joyful News of converted Sinners to them in Heaven; but they that tell them this, cannot also acquaint them with the inward secret desires and cogitations of mens hearts, being in a capacity, by observing in men the signs and fruits of true Repentance, to know the one, but having no way by their own natural power to understand the other.

The second place is, *Matt. 22. 30.* where our Saviour says, *That the just at the Resurrection shall be as the Angels in Heaven:* From whence they infer, that if our Prayers and Concerns are known to the Angels, and they on that account may be Invoked; why should they not be known also to the Saints departed, who are as they, enjoying the same blissful Vision of God? To this may be returned,

That we are no more sure of the knowledge of Angels in this particular, than we are of that of Saints, and therefore the one ought to be proved before the other be granted. The Angels in Heaven see indeed *the Face of Christ's Father which is in Heaven;* but the meaning of that is not, that by enjoying the sight of God's Face, they therein see and hear all things transacted here on Earth, but that they are God's Ministers always attending round about his Throne, and waiting before him to receive his Commands, and to execute his Pleasure.

But was this Knowledge the Privilege of the Angelical Nature, the equality which just Men in the Text are said to have to the Angels, is not meant an equality of Knowledge or Perfection of Nature, but a similitude of State and Privileges; and this appears from the Context: *In the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels of God.* The just shall not be equal to the Angels in every respect, for as they differ in Nature and Kind, so they shall have distinct natural qualities and operations, but in respect

of Bliss and Happiness, they as the Angels in that Spiritualized State, shall not need Matrimony for the propagation of their Kind, nor Food for the preservation of their incorruptible Bodies; they shall be free from all the necessities that attend temporal humane Life, and all the affections that arise from the Body and sensitive part of Man; they as Angels shall be the Children of God, being Children of the Resurrection, Partakers of the Bliss, and immoveably possessors of all the Privileges of the Sons of God. Yet

Was this equality to the Angels, to be meant of an equality in Nature and Knowledge, yet the Saints departed are not to enjoy it until the Resurrection; and so, though the Angels on that account might be Invoked, yet the Saints departed, who are not till the Resurrection to have this excellent privilege conferred on them, are not till then to have this Homage and Worship paid to them: *At the Resurrection they shall be as the Angels of God*; whether they are before that admitted into the Beatifical Vision, we need not now dispute, since, if they are, this Angelical Privilege of seeing all things in the Face of God, is reserved for the Saints, as a farther addition of Bliss till that day.

Again, they produce *Revel. 5. 8.* where it's said, *That the four Beasts, and twenty four Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and Golden Vials full of Odours, which are the Prayers of Saints.* By *the Prayers of Saints*, they mean, of those Saints that are living upon the Earth; and by *the four Beasts, and twenty four Elders*, the Saints that are in Heaven; and from thence draw their Argument, that Saints in Heaven do offer up the Prayers of Holy Men living upon the Earth.

But now if they are mistaken in the sense of this Text, and by *the four Beasts, and twenty four Elders*, are



are not meant the Members of the Church Triumphant, but the Bishops and Elders of the Church Militant, whose Office it is to present the Prayers and Praises of the Church to God; then this Text cannot afford them the least shew of reason for their Invocation. Dr. *Hamond* and many other Learned Expositors, are of Opinion, that either, this whole Text is nothing but a representation of the Church below offering up Prayers by their Pastors, who are the Mouths of the Congregation, to God through the Lamb; (and it's said Verse 10. *That they shall Reign upon the Earth;*) or else, a representation of the whole Church of Christ both in Heaven and Earth, joyning together in their Doxologies and Praises to God for the Victories of the Lamb, and the Redemption of the World by his Blood; and for this sence the next Verse seems to give it, where they are said to *Sing a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book and ——— for thou wast Slain, and redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation.*

Another place to be explained, which they sometimes mention as on their side, is, *Revel. 6. 10.* where the Souls of the Martyrs under the Altar, are said to cry, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth!* Now say they, If the Souls of Martyrs Pray for Vengeance upon their Persecutors and Murderers; much more may we suppose them to Pray for Mercy and Deliverances for their Fellow-Members and Sufferers. To this may be replied,

That these words cannot signify a formal Prayer of the Martyrs to God for Revenge on their Persecutors; they who after their Lord's Example prayed God to forgive their Murderers when they were on Earth, cannot be supposed, now they are in a more perfect State,

to pray for Vengeance upon them; but the words are only an Emblem and Representation of the certainty of God's Judgments and Vengeance overtaking them: By *the Souls of them that were slain, and cry under the Altar,* is meant their Blood, and the Sin of Murthering them, and (as we are wont to say) Murther is a crying Sin, and as it's said, that *Abel's Blood cryed for Vengeance,* so the Sin of shedding their Blood cryed, that is, would certainly awake and provoke the Justice of God to take Vengeance on them for it: This is well explained by a passage in the Book of *Esdra*s, *Behold the innocent and righteous blood cryeth unto me, and the souls of the just complain continually, and therefore, saith the Lord, I will surely avenge them, &c.* But

Dr. Ham.

*Esdra*s 2. 15.

Let their inference be granted, that the Souls of Martyrs in the future State, do pray for their Fellow-Sufferers that are left behind; it does not follow that their Fellow-Sufferers pray to them, or that they offer up their Prayers made to them unto God.

Lastly, They cite *Gen.* 48. 16. when *Jacob*, blessing the two Sons of *Joseph*, thus Prays: *The Angel that redeemed me from all evil, bless the Lads.* This will require no long answer:

God being pleased often to make use of the Ministry of Angels in sending succour and relief to good Men, *Jacob* prayed, not unto the Angel, but to God, that he would appoint the same blessed Angel that Administred unto him in all his streights, to be the Instrument of his good Providence to those two Sons of *Joseph*, whom he had now made his own, and caused them to be called after his name. Or else,

If the Patriarch must be thought here to have prayed to the Angel, we must suppose with *Athanasius*, and others of the Fathers, that Angel to be Christ the Son of God.

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And the same answer is to be given to *Revel. 8. 4.* where it's said, *That the smoke of the Incense which came with the Prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angels hand*; that is, Christ's, the Angel of the Covenant, and therefore this Angel that offered up the Prayers of the Saints, is called, *vers. 3. Another Angel*; intimating, that it was a special Angel, one different both in Nature and Office, from the other seven mentioned *vers. 2.* and described there as *Ministring Spirits*; *And I saw the seven Angels which stood before God, &c. vers. 2.* and then *vers. 3. And another Angel came--- &c.*

IV. *That there is no proof for it from the Fathers of the three first hundred years, and more.*

THE *Trent* Fathers and the Catechism put out by their Authority, having declared Invocation of Saints to be a custom received and continued in the Church ever since the Apostles time, the *Romish* Authors have not been wanting to turn every Stone, to search every Author, to produce and strain every sentence and expression that looks that way, to the height, in order to the making it good; but how short their proofs fall of it, will be made evident by these following particulars.

I. Those that have taken the most pains to seek for Testimonies, have not been able to produce any tolerable one out of the genuine Writings of the Fathers within the first three hundred years after Christ; they cite indeed the Hierarchy of *Dionysius Areopagita*, *Origen's* Comments on the second Chapter of *Job*, and the twenty first of *Numbers*, the Works of *St. Ephraem*, and *Athanasius's* of the most Holy Mother of God; but these

*Concil. Trident. sess. 25. Catech. Rom. par. 3. c. 2.*



Monf. Dal. Coc.  
Censur. Patr. in  
D. Areop. Rivet  
in Crit. Sac.  
Bell. de Scrip.  
Eccl.

these have been sufficiently proved by many of our Learned Men, and acknowledged by some of no obscure Fame amongst them, to be spurious, and falsely father'd on them; and then for their Proofs out of *Irenæus*, *Eusebius*, and *St. Ambrose*, it's easie to shew that the first is grossly misunderstood, the second corrupted, and the third retracted by that Father.

*Irenæus* indeed is an Ancient Father, and of sufficient Authority, but his words are little to their purpose; they are these: *Sicut Eva seducta est ut effugeret deum,*

*Irenæus adver.*  
Har. l. 15. c. 10.

*sic Maria suasa est obedire Deo, ut Virginis Evæ Virgo*

*Maria fieret Advocata:* Wherein the Blessed Virgin *Mary* is termed the Advocate of *Eve*. Now to make

this a pat proof for their Invocation, they must put this sence upon it, that the Blessed Virgin, being a Glorified Saint in Heaven, did at the request and desires of *Eve*, living upon Earth, represent her case to God, and interceed with him on her behalf; but how could *Eve* alive request this of the Virgin *Mary*, when *Eve* died above three thousand years before *Mary* was born.

*Iren. l. 5. c. 31.*

Or how could *Irenæus* think the Blessed Virgin in a capacity to do this, whose Opinion it was, with the generality of the Fathers in that Age, that her Soul as all others of departed Saints, were yet in an invisible place, and not admitted to the Beatifick Vision.

*Aquin. Durand.*

Or how could *Eve* stand in need of her Advocateship who, if it be true, as the *Romanists* hold, that our Saviour at his Resurrection freed the Saints of the Old Testament from their *Limbus*, and carried them up with him into Heaven, and the Presence of God, was a Glorified Saint in Heaven whilst she was living upon the Earth, and so was in a better State to be an Advocate for the Virgin *Mary*, than the Virgin *Mary* for her.

*Bell. de Sanct.*  
*beat. l. 1. c. 19.*

Thus you see, as clear a Proof as *Bellarmin* thinks this to be, nothing can be more ridiculously and im-

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pertinently quoted; some other meaning then of the words must be found out, and the most obvious and natural is this, that the Virgin *Mary* is here by a Figure put for Christ her Son, according to the Flesh, and said to do that, as she was the happy Mother of a Son who did it; and thus indeed she is Advocate for *Eve*, and all *Eve's* Posterity, instrumentally, not by her self personally, but by her Son, she being that Vessel made choice of by the Holy Ghost, to bear him in her Womb, who by taking Flesh of her, became the Saviour of *Eve* and all Mankind.

For the Testimony of *Eusebius*, it, as *Bellarmino* reports it, runs thus: *We Honour those heavenly Souldiers as God's Friends, we approach unto their Monuments, and Pray unto them as unto Holy Men, by whose intercession we profess to receive much help and assistance*; but it's apparent, as many learned men have shewn, that *Bellarmino* took this Allegation, not out of *Eusebius's* Original, but a corrupt Translation made by *Trapezuntius*, and afterwards followed by *Dadræus* a Doctor of *Paris*, who set forth *Eusebius*; there being no such words, as *Praying to them as unto Holy Men*, to be found in him, speaking his own Language; his words are these: ὁ δὲν καὶ ὅτι τὰς *Evang. prag.*  
 θυμὰς αὐτῶν ἐθελῶμεν προσεύχασθαι, καὶ τὰς ἐν ταῖς τοῖς ποιεῖν, &c. *l. 13. c. 7.*  
*It is our custom to come to their Tombs and Monuments, and to make our Prayers, not αὐτοῖς, to them, to those Martyrs, as the Translator and Bellarmine would have it, but πρὸς ταύτας, i. e. θυμὰς, at or before their Tombs and Monuments, and to Honour those Blessed Souls.*

I might now pass over *St. Ambrose*, he living beyond the time I undertook to answer for, *Anno 374*, but whatsoever he said of this nature, was said when he was but a young Christian, and recalled and contradicted by him afterwards; in his Book of Widows he exhorts them to *Pray to the Angels and Martyrs, whom* *Speculatores vite ætænamque nostrorum.*  
*be*

*Proprio Sanguine.*

*Amb. in Rom. c. 1. tom. 5. Tu tamen, Domine, solus es invocandus. De obitu Theod. tom. 3.*

he calls beholders of our Lives and Actions ; but *Baronius* himself confesses, ( as *Bishop Andrews* proves it out of his Life of *St. Ambrose* ) that this Book was written presently after his Conversion, when he was but a raw Divine, and had not thoroughly learned the Christian Doctrine ; and this appears by some other mistakes he was guilty of, besides this, that are of as dangerous a nature ; when in the same Book he asserts, *That the Martyrs either had no Sin at all, or what they had, they did themselves wash away with their own Bloud.* But that *St. Ambrose* changed his opinion concerning this point of Invocation, we are as sure as that once he held it, since we find him afterwards plainly asserting the contrary Doctrine, in such words as these : *That to procure God's favour, we need no Advocate but a devout Mind :* and again, speaking with relation to the two young Sons of *Theodosius*, *Thou only, Oh Lord, art to be Invoked, and Prayed unto*, namely, for a Blessing and Protection upon them.

2. They make the Rhetorical Flourishes and Apostrophes of the Fathers in their Panegyricks of the Martyrs, to be solemn Forms of Invocation of them. The Fathers, about the latter end of the Fourth Century, observing Piety and Devotion to decay and wax cold, as the Church increased in Riches and Prosperity, thought themselves obliged, by all the Wit and Art and Rhetorick they had, to retrieve, if it was possible, the pristine heat of Devotion that was formerly in it ; to that purpose they spake high and large in commendation of their Martyrs, and sometimes in their Orations directed their words to them, as though they had been there present, not with an intent to teach the People to pray unto them, or to rely upon their merits, but to signify the mighty favour they were in with God, and the more effectually to excite them to an imitation



imitation of their Virtues. Many such strains of Rhetorick occur in the Writings of *St. Hierom*, *St. Basil*, *St. Gregory Nyssen*, *St. Gregory Nazianzen*, and others. So *St. Gregory Nyssen* speaks to *Theodore* the Martyr in his Oration, *Gather together the Troops of thy Brother Martyrs, and thou with them beseech God to stay the Invasion of the Barbarians.* Orat. in Sanct. Theod.

So *St. Gregory Nazianzen* in his Oration calls unto *St. Cyprian*, *St. Basil*, *St. Athanasius*, to each after this manner: *Do thou favourably look upon us from on high.* Orat. in Athan.

After the same manner does *St. Hierom* conclude his Funeral Oration on *Paula*, *Farewel, oh Paula, and help the old Age of thy Honourer with thy Prayers.* Now what is there in all this but what's usual in all Authors both Sacred and Profane? The design of the Fathers were to raise the People to as high an Opinion as they could, both of the Persons of the Martyrs and their Virtues that made them so illustrious; and might they not make use of their best Art and Rhetorick to do it? What is more in this than those Apostrophes frequently found in the Sacred Writings even to insensate Creatures? *Hear ye, oh Mountains, the Lord's controversie! Praise the Lord ye Dragons and all Deeps!* And who will infer from hence, that the insensate Creatures were hereby invoked and addrest unto.

3. A great part of the Testimonies they produce out of the Fathers, are to prove the Intercession of Saints in Heaven for us, and not our Invocating of them; and so they change the Question, and are at a great deal of pains to prove that which no body denies; such sayings as assert the *Saints Praying for us*, are frequent among the ancient Fathers, and that not onely for the Church Militant in general, but in particular for those whose persons and conditions were well known to them on Earth, and these are cunningly

shuffled in by the *Romish* Doctors as proofs for *Invocation of them*, with a design to impose on the unwary *Vulgar*, who are supposed not to take notice of the difference (but it's a wonder if they should not, for it's wide enough) *betwixt their Praying for us, and our Praying to them*. Neither is this the only instance wherein those cunning Sophisters play this game, First alter the Nature of the Question, and then where they have no Adversary, to Triumph in demonstrating the Truth of it:

If the Question be, whether the Bishop of *Rome* be the Supreme Head of the Church, and has an absolute Jurisdiction and Monarchy over all other Bishops and Churches? they shall bring you a number of Testimonies out of both Greek and Latine Fathers, to prove St. *Peter* had a Primacy of Honour and Authority.

*Bellar. de Rom. Pont. l. 2. c. 15, 16.*

If the Question be whether the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament be Substantially turned into the Body and Blood of Christ; they shall write a whole Volume to prove the Truth and Reality of Christ's Presence in it, which we own as well as they, but after a Spiritual manner, not Corporally and by the way of Transubstantiation.

*Bellar. de Euchar. l. 2.*

If the Question be about Purgatory, a place prepared for the Purification of those Souls that depart hence not quite cleansed; they shall alledge you Fathers, and those not a few, of unquestionable Name, to prove the utter Consumption of all things by Fire at the end of the World.

*St. Ambr. Hil. Orig. Hierom, &c.*

So here, when the Question is whether we ought to Pray to Saints departed; they bring innumerable Fathers to prove that the Saints departed do Pray for us; hence we hear of that of St. *Ignatius*, *My Spirit Salutes you, not only now, but will also, when I enjoy God*: and of St. *Chrysostom* in his Oration to those that were to be

*Epist. ad Tral.*

be Baptized, *Remember me when that Kingdom receives you.*

4. They produce the Sayings and Practices of some few in the Church for the general and allowed Doctrine and Practice of the whole Church. If the Story should be true that *Justina*, a Christian Virgin, did in great distress, joyntly Supplicate the Blessed Virgin with God and Christ, does it follow, that it was the practice of all to do so? It cannot be denied but that many of the Fathers let slip, in the heat of their Affection and Oration, many unwary speeches to this purpose, and that many, otherwise good Men, were guilty of this excess of Devotion to the Martyrs; the many Miracles God was pleased to work at the Memorials of the Martyrs for the Honour and Confirmation of the Faith, reasonably begat a custom amongst Christians to resort to those places, and there to offer their Prayers to God; and thinking, it may be, they could not easily honour those too much whom God was pleased after so wonderful a manner to declare his esteem of, from Praying to God at their Tombs, they began to pray to them themselves. But now.

We are to distinguish betwixt the Speeches of some particular Fathers, and the general Doctrine of the Church; betwixt what they express in Rhetorical strains to move Affection, and what they lay down in plain terms to inform the judgment; betwixt what comes from them in the heat of their Discourses and popular Orations, and what in cool and deliberate debates they set down for the truth of Christ; it's generally confessed, that the Fathers oft-times hyperbolize, particularly *St. Chrysostom*; and we must not take their flights of Fancy, for the Doctrine of the Church.

We are to distinguish also betwixt what the Church did teach and allow, and what she only tolerated and was forced to bear with; the Bishops and Governours



of the Church being many times engaged in weightier matters, in defending the Christian cause against Heathens and Hereticks, were not always at leisure to reform Abuses and irregular Practices, but were forced too often to connive at those Faults which they had not

*St. Aust. de morib. Eccles. c. 31. tom. I.*

*Epis. 119. ad Jan. approbare non possum, liberiorius improbare non audeo.*

time and opportunity to Redress; *St. Austin* complains much of this piece of Superstition in his days, that it had got such an head, that the good Father wanted power to give a check to it: *I can no way allow them,* says he, *and yet I dare not freely reprove them, lest I either offend some good Men, or provoke some turbulent Spirits.*

5. They cite the practice of the Ancients praying to God, that for the Intercession of those Holy Men that had died in the Lord, he would grant them their requests, as a good proof for direct praying to them. The Ancients generally believing that the Saints and Martyrs in the future State did continually pray to God in behalf of the Church Militant on Earth, and some, that their Souls were present at their Shrines and Tombs, and did joyn their Intercessions with those Prayers of the Christians that were there offered up to God, were wont in their Addresses to mention the Martyrs, and to beg the effects of their Intercessions, that God would be moved by their Supplications as well as their own, to grant a supply of their wants and necessities; but this is no more praying to them, than *Moses* may be said to pray to *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, when he besought God to remember them in behalf of the People of *Israel*; than we may be said to pray for help to that part of the Church of Christ that is at a great distance from us, when we desire God to hear the Prayers of his Church Catholick dispersed throughout the whole World in the behalf of all Christian People, that in all places call upon him. Thus it's said by

by the Historian that the Emperor *Theodosius*, when *Eugenius* and his Complices raised that dangerous Rebellion against him, *repaired with his Clergie and Laity to the Oratories and Chappels, and there lying Prostrate before the Tombs and Monuments of the Apostles and Martyrs begged aid and succour by intercession of the Saints*. He did not Pray to any Saint or Saints, he did not beg help of them, but supposing they Prayed with him and for him, he Prayed unto God, that he would send him help for the sake of their Intercessions in his behalf. This is also the meaning of those expressions in *St. Austin*, that *They ought to commend themselves to the Prayers of the Martyrs, and frequent their Tombs with a Religious Solemnity, that they may become partakers of their Merits, and be helpt by their Prayers*; that is, not by Praying to them, but (holding, as was then commonly believed, that when Christians came to their Tombs, the blessed Martyrs joyned their Supplications with them) by Praying to God to afford them the benefit of their Prayers, and that their Petitions might succeed the better for the sake of their Requests put up in conjunction with their own. The same account may be given of *St. Basil's* words in his Oration on the forty Martyrs, *He that is in distress flies to them, and he that is in prosperity runs to them; the one that he may have his condition changed, the other that he may have his continued; but now to fly and to run unto them*, signifies no more than to fly and run to the Churches and Tombs where they lie interr'd; for so it follows, here a *Woman praying for her Son is heard; and here let us, together with those Martyrs, pour forth our Prayers*: Supposing, it's likely, as was mentioned before, that the Martyrs Souls were continually about their Tombs, and prayed for all that came thither to pray for themselves, the Father exhorts Christians to go thither, *not to pray to them,*

*Ruffin. Hist.*  
l. 2. c. 33.

*Sanctorum intercessione.*

*Aug. de Civ.*  
pro mort. c. 4.

*Basil. Hom. 20.*  
in 40. Mart.

them, but to joyn with them in Praying unto God.

6. They tell us of many Miracles wrought by God upon Addresses made to Saints, and in this they triumph as an undeniable Proof that God approves of such Addresses; *God beareth not Sinners*, neither will he give his *Glory to another*, and therefore were Prayers made to Saints a sin of that sacrilegious nature, as to rob God of his Honour, it's not to be thought that he'd give such countenance to them against himself, as to crown them with success.

August. de Ci-  
vit. Dei. l. 22.  
c. 8.

To this it may be answered, It's certain, that at first God was pleased, upon the Prayers of Christians put up to *himself*, to work many Miracles for the Confirmation of the Faith; but that any were wrought in answer to such Prayers that at those places were in after-Ages made *to the Martyrs*, is very uncertain, and much to be suspected: *St. Austin* names but two instances of this kind that I have met withal, and at the same time he mentions them, blasts their credit, by telling us he had no undoubted Authority for the truth of them: *St. Chrysostom* not only declares, that Miracles in his time were ceased, but hath wrote a Discourse on purpose to give us the reasons why they are so; so that all the Miracles the Church of *Rome* pretends to on this account, are either Delusions of Satan, which God sometimes permits him to work for the Tryal of his People, or else Cheats and Impostures performed by Cunning Men of their own, to wheedle and impose on the easie and credulous Vulgar.

V. That



V. *That there is full and evident Proof in Scripture against it.*

**I**F that general Rule of St. *Austin's* be allowed of, *Aug. de confes. Evang. l. 1. c. 18.* that *God is so to be Worshipt*, that is, as to all the Essential parts of it, *as he himself has commanded to be Worshipt*, then all those places of Scripture that command us to direct our Prayers only to God, and only in the Name and Mediation of Jesus Christ, do with equal force forbid us to direct our Prayers to any other Object, or to use any other Name and Mediation. Now Texts to this purpose are innumerable.

*Oh thou that bearest Prayers, unto thee shall all Flesh come.* Psal. 65. 2.

*Call upon me in the time of trouble ---- and I will deliver thee.* Psal. 50. 15.

*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Matt. 11. 28.

*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* John 16. 23.

*In every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanks-giving, let your requests be made known unto God.* Phil. 4. 6.

*If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God, who gives to all men liberally, --- &c.* Jam. 1. 5.

*How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?* Now if none but God is to be believed in, none but God is to be called upon. Rom. 10. 14.

These are very plain and convincing, and no others need to be produced; but because the *Romish* Authors have been practising upon some others, endeavouring to obscure and weaken their evidence, which are yet no less clear and full; I shall bring them forth also, and not only wipe off the dust that has been cast upon them,

them, but restore them to their own natural Sense and Perspicuity.

They are chiefly these Four.

The first is, *Luke 11. 2. When ye pray, say, Our Father, which art in Heaven, ----- &c. for thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory for ever and ever.* Now the meaning of this Precept must be one or both these two things, either that we should use this form of words when we pray, or that we should compose all our Prayers after this pattern; take which we will, in either sense they oblige us to direct all our Prayers to our *Heavenly Father, whose is the Kingdom, Power, and Glory*; whensoever we repeat this Form of Prayer, we address to God as the Object, saying, *Our Father*; and if no Prayer is to be made, but after this pattern, then still it follows, that no other ought to be the Object of them, but he who is *Our Heavenly Father*. 'Tis generally concluded on all sides, that in this absolute and perfect Form of our Lord's Prayer is contained a Summary of whatever ought to be the subject-matter of a Christians Prayer. Now since every Petition in it is directed immediately to God our Heavenly Father, it follows, that whenever we pray, we are not only to pray for no other things but these Blessings, but also to beg them of no other Being but him.

*Spenc. Script.  
mistaken by  
Protest. p. 57.*

But to put by the force of the Argument taken from this command of our Lord's, *When ye pray, say*; or, *after this manner pray ye*; the *Romanists* tell us, that it's true, we are to imitate this Prayer of Christ's in composing our own, as to its brevity and compendiousness, as to the subject-matter of it, as to the Catholicness of its Spirit, obliging us to pray for others at the same time when we pray for our selves, saying, *Our Father*; but not as to the *Object* to whom our Prayers are to be address: for then by the same Argument

ment we may exclude the Second and Third Persons in the Blessed Trinity, as well as Angels and Saints; to this it's no hard matter to give an Answer. And

1. It must be confest, that the word Father in this Prayer is to be meant chiefly, though *not solely*, of the first Person in the Sacred Trinity; he being the Root and Fountain of the Deity, and the prime Original of all our happiness, may in special be called upon by us, so far as is consistent with our acknowledgment of the equal Divinity of the other two Persons; for though the Son and the Holy Ghost partake alike with him of the Divine Nature, and consequently have a right to the same Adoration, yet forasmuch as God the Father is the *First Person*, and the Father who Communicates that Divine Nature to them both, forasmuch as John 2. 29.  
John 6. 37.  
John 5. 26. God the Father hath that Essence in himself, and what he is, is from none, but the Son and Holy Ghost have it by Communication from the Father, and what they are, they are from him, this Title may bear a particular and primary respect to him. Accordingly we find the Apostles in a particular manner directing their Prayers to God the Father: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us, — I cease not to make mention of you in my Prayers, that the* Eph. 1. 3.  
Vers. 17. *God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, — for this cause I bow my Knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus, that he would grant you — But*

2. The word Father in this Prayer is to be taken Essentially, and not Personally, and so excludes not the other two Persons of the most Holy and Undivided Trinity, but onely those that are of a different Nature from them. Now if the whole three Persons are one in Essence, then whenever we Pray to, and do Honour to God the Father, we must at the same time Worship the other two, though not so directly, who are



John 10. 20. one with him. Thus our Saviour speaks: *I and the Father are one.* Yea, the whole three Persons are so, as St. John tells us expressly, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* We read that 'twas the Will of God, *That all men should honour the Son as they do the Father,* and that we should Honour the Holy Ghost as well as either, because we are equally Baptized into his Name: *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.* Now if the Son and the Holy Ghost are one in Essence with the Father, and to be Honoured with the same Honour, then although in this Title, the Father be only expressly named and invoke, the other two Persons can't but be implied and comprehended in it.

3. We may consider that this Doctrine of the Trinity, being in a great measure a stranger to the Old Testament, and the Apostles, when our Saviour gave them this Prayer, not sufficiently instructed in it, our Saviour might teach them to call upon God in such an expression, which, though for the present they might understand only of God the Father, yet afterwards when they should come more fully to understand and believe the Trinity, might fairly be extended to take in the other two persons, Son and Holy Ghost.

4. Since it is by virtue of our Spiritual relation to God by Christ, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, that in a more special and particular manner he is Our Father; whenever we call upon God *as a Father, and Our Father,* it implies that we address to him in the Name and Mediation of Christ, and by the assistance of the Holy Ghost; the Apostle tells Believers that they had received *the Spirit of Adoption, whereby they cried Abba Father:* St. Chrysostom's Notion on the Text is, That the

Rom. 8. 15.

the *Jews* during the time of the Old Testament, being under a servile Dispensation, did seldom or never presume to call upon God by that familiar appellation of a Father; but the Holy Ghost moving Believers, after a miraculous and extraordinary way, in the first days of Christianity, to invoke God by that name, as our Saviour had directed his Disciples before, might well be called *the Spirit of Adoption*, as thereby declaring them to be his Adopted Sons.

Another evident proof are those words of the Apostle, *1 Tim. 2. 5. There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* The natural importance of the words seems to be this, that, as there is but one God only, and no more, to whom we ought to Pray, so there is but one Mediator only, and no more, by whom we have access with boldness to the Throne of Grace; *one Mediatour* Emphatically, in the same sense as there is *one God*, and you may as well make to your selves more Gods as more Mediators.

But to weaken the strength of this evidence, the *Remanists* distinguish betwixt a Mediator of Redemption and a Mediator of Intercession, and tell us, that the Text is only to be understood of the former, which indeed is but one, but not of the latter, which may be more than one, even as many as there are Angels and Saints in Heaven: But how little this Distinction does serve their turn, may appear by considering,

1. That there is a vast difference betwixt an Intercessor and a Mediator of Intercession; that Saints in Heaven, out of that Charity that all the Members of Christ have for one another, do in general interceed for the good of that Body of which they are a part, was owned and granted before; but this makes them not Mediators of Intercession, to which Office it belongs to receive the Prayers of others, and to present them

them to God; and in order hereunto, they must hear the Prayers of others, and receive information concerning their particular States and Conditions, which they are not capable of.

2. That this Text is especially to be understood of that part of Christ's Mediatory Office that consists in interceding for us; the Apostle seems to oppose these words to the Heathen Form of Praying, which was to many Gods by many *Dæmons*, who were reputed Agents or Mediatours between their chief Gods and them; now all that the Heathens attributed to their *Dæmons* was Intercession onely, and the Apostle shews that Christ being made a Mediatour, every way effectual for that end, there could be no necessity of any Mediatours of Intercession besides him; so that the Apostle here replies two things to the Heathens multiplicity of Mediatorus: 1. That God had appointed but one, the God-man Christ Jesus; therefore he says, Ver. 7. That he was *ordained a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity*; for establishing the Christian Faith and Truth in this particular especially, of *one God and one Mediatour*, in contradiction to the plurality of Gods and Mediatours amongst the Gentiles. Answerable to this, are those words of the Apostle in another place: *Though there be many that are called Gods (as there be Gods many and Lords many) but to us there is but one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ*; here there is a manifest and direct opposition betwixt the Heathen way of Praying, and the Christian; the Heathens had many Gods and many Lords Mediatours, the Christians, but one God and one Lord Mediator; the Heathens had many Sovereign Gods betwixt whom and men they supposed there was no immediate intercourse; they had also many under Gods or *Dæmons*, by whose Agency and Mediatourship they Address themselves to their

1 Cor. 8. 5.



their Sovereign Gods ; this the Apostle confutes, and shews that Christians are taught to believe and profess but one God, Maker of all things, to whom they ought to pray ; and but one Lord, Mediator and Advocate, by whom they offer their Petitions to him. 2. That there needed no other besides this one, he being a Mediator of Redemption too, and on that account had not only an Authority and Commission from God to shew for that Office, but an infinite worth and invaluable merits of his own to plead in the behalf of Mankind, and to procure the granting of their requests ; he hath purchast what he begs for, and atoned for what he prays for ; having no sin of his own to answer for, he was excellently qualified to intercede for Pardon for our Sins ; and having perfectly fulfilled all Righteousness, and shed his most precious Bloud for us, he highly merited of God, both for us and for himself ; for us, the several Blessings he intercedes for ; for himself, the Godlike Honour and Royalty to be the Donor and Dispenser of them. Hence it is that the Apostle here makes his Mediation to depend on his Propitiation, and after he had told us there is but one Mediator, presently subjoyns, *Who gave himself a Ransom for all* : to Ver. 6. the same purpose is that of St. John, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father*, that is, the same with a Mediator of Intercession, and that we might be fully assured of the greatness of his Authority and Power, he adds, *Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins*.

A third Scripture against Saint-Invocation are those words of our Saviour, *Mat. 4. 10. taken out of Deut. 6. 13. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*. Now if Prayer be a necessary and chief part of God's Worship, as all are agreed it is, we are bound by this Scripture to pray only to God.

But :

But to this they say, there are several degrees of Religious Worship, and that it is only an interior kind wherewith they worship the Saints departed, called by them *δουλέια*, when it's applied to ordinary Saints, and *καρδουλέια*, when to the blessed Virgin; and that they never worship them as they do God, with *λατρεία*, the highest kind of Worship; if it be asked, How does this appear, since the same Signs and outward Acts of Worship are performed to the one as well as to the other? they answer, that they have higher conceptions and intentions of Honour to God in the exercise of their Offices to him, than when they perform the like to any Angel or Saint departed. To this, several things may be said,

Ver. 3.

Luke 4. 6.

1. If these words, *him only shalt thou serve*, are to be understood only of the highest degree of Religious Worship, as a part of the whole, and distinguished from a lower kind, they had not been a sufficient answer to the Devils demand; he might thus have answered: I acknowledge the Sovereign and Almighty Power of God, as well as you, *That it is he alone can command Stones to become Bread*; and this Power I have over the Kingdoms of the World, I own to have received from him, *for it was delivered to me*. And therefore I do not desire that thou shouldest worship me as thou dost God, with *λατρεία*, with the highest degree of Worship; but only with *δουλέια*, a lower kind; thy Heart, the highest and most elevated thoughts and conceptions of thy mind, may be given to God, 'tis only the outward Act that I challenge of thee, that thou wouldest only *fall down and worship me*, or by falling down worship me.

2. That the Scriptures often use these two words, *λατρεία*, and *δουλέια*, promiscuously, to signify the same thing;

thing ; and as sometimes *καρῖα*, is set to signifie that civil Honour and Service that's due to Men in Eminency and Authority ; so is *θελα*, to express that Religious Worship that's only due to God. As to the first, God thus threatens the *Israelites*, therefore thou shalt *serve* thine Enemies ; as to the other, many places may be instanced in. Thus when *Samuel* exhorted the House of *Israel*, to prepare their Hearts unto the Lord, and to *serve him only* ; and when the Apostle urged Christians to be fervent in Spirit, *serving the Lord*, and when our Saviour said, *ye cannot serve God and Mammon*, *δουλέω*, is the word made use of.

3. That there is no such distinction in Religious Worship as an higher and lower kind, because whatever is Religious Worship, is such, with respect to God only as the Object ; and therefore can be but one, and that in the highest degree, as God is one, and infinitely exalted above all. *Religion*, say the School-men, is a *Moral Vertue which exhibits due Worship to God, as the Principal of all things*. *Lactantius* therefore derives it à *Religando*, because it ties man to God ; and *St. Austin*, à *Religando*, because men chuse God again, whom they had forsaken. 'Tis not therefore whatsoever is excellent, but whatsoever is Divine, and as it is Divine, that is the Object of Religion : now Angels and Holy Men, although there be some kind of Honour due to those Excellencies that are found in them, an Honour commensurate to those Excellencies ; yet falling infinitely short of Divinity, must be excluded from having any share of that Worship, which either by God himself, or the universal consent of Mankind, is made Religious, that is, appropriate to God. Neither,

4. Will it help the matter to say, that though the outward Acts and Expressions of Worship to both are the same, there is a vast difference in the inward Devotion :

Dent. 28. 48.

καρῖα.

I Sam. 7. 3.

δουλέω.

Rom. 10. 11.

δουλέω.

Matt. 6. 24.

δὲ δούλα διὰ

δουλέω.

L. 4. Inst. c. 28.

de ver. Rel.

c. 55.



votion of their Mind and Souls, and that when they pray to Saints and Angels, they must not be thought to do it, with that height of affection, and trust and resignation, wherewith they call upon God? For, when all is done, words and outward Acts will be reckon'd to signify according to that sense and meaning Custom and Institution hath stamp't upon them; and let the inward thoughts of the Votary be what they will, if he apply to Saints and Angels in such Expressions and Offices, or with such Rites and Ceremonies, as according to the usual acceptation of them, naturally import that Hope and Confidence, that Love and Duty, that is due to God alone, he will be deem'd to ascribe unto them the Honour which he owes to God. Outward Acts of Worship are declarative of the inward respect and veneration of the Soul to God, as words are of the inward thoughts and apprehensions of the Mind; and, as when I use such words, which according to common custom signify such a Proposition, I must be concluded to mean and intend that Proposition; so when I use such outward Acts of Worship, which by Custom or Institution signify the Honour due to God, to any other, I must be thought to ascribe the Honour that's due to God, to that other. The *Corinthians*, although they knew that an Idol was nothing in the World, yet because they observed the Feasts that were dedicated to the Honour of the Idol, *Eating and Drinking in the Idols Temple*, are said by the Apostle to Drink the Cup of Devils, and to be Partakers of the Devils Tables, and to have Fellowship with Devils; that is, by doing those actions that in those places were used to signify the Worship of the Heathen Gods, although they intended no Religion, but Civility and Complement in the compliance, they are said to Worship those Heathen Gods, who were not Gods, but Devils. The  
*Isra-*

1 Cor. 20. 21.

*Israelites* that halted betwixt God and *Baal*, although they could not but have higher apprehensions of God than *Baal*, *Yet by bowing the knee to Baal, and kissing his* 1 Kings 19. 18. *mouth*, by using those outward Acts of Worship, where-with the Heathens Worshipt him, are said to be guilty of Idolatry. In sum, was a mental reservation of keeping the Heart to God, and intending the highest degrees of Honour and Worship to him, sufficient to clear men from Idolatry, whilst they perform outward Acts Instituted and customarily observed for Religious Worship to any besides God; the *Israelites* could not be Exod. 32. 8. guilty of it, when they Sacrificed to the Golden-Calf they had made; nor the wiser sort of Heathens, who whilst they knew the vulgar Gods to be no Gods, but Cheats and Devils, did out of fear of punishment comply with the vulgar practice of burning Incense to them; and the Primitive Fathers were very much mistaken, who judged not only those Christians who at the Emperor's command Sacrificed to Idols against their Consciences, guilty of Idolatry, but even those, who, though no threats could move them to do it in person, did yet either purchase Certificates that they had done it, Libellatici. when they did it not, or procure some others, their Heathen Friends and Servants to do it for them, implicitly to be guilty of it.

I shall name but one Scripture more, *Col. 2. 18. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of Angels ——— and not holding the Head.* Where we see the Apostle expressly condemns the Worship of Angels as forsaking of Christ and not holding the Head; and if the Worship of Angels, it follows with greater force of Reason, the Worship of Saints, departed. What this Worship was, *Theodoret* upon the place informs us, where he says, *That the Jews, that is, Jewish Christians, having received the Law by*

*the Ministration of Angels, and holding that the God of all was Invisible and Inaccessible, taught that men ought to obtain the favour of God by the Means and Intercession of Angels; and the same Father tells us, that they had Oratories or Chappels of St. Michael.*

*Council Laod.  
Can. 35.*

This *St. Paul* calls, not holding the Head, because they set up more Mediatours besides Christ, who was the onely one appointed by God, and they that joyn others with him, do forsake him; accordingly the Council of *Laodicea* condemned it as Idolatrous; the words of the Canon are these: *That Christians ought not to forsake the Church of God, and Invoke Angels, because they that do so, forsake our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, and give themselves to Idolatry.* *St. Paul* and the Canon both speak so direct and home against the *Romanists*, that *Baronius*, it seems, was hard put to it, to answer them, when he's forc't to beg *Theodore's* Pardon, and tells him, with his good leave, that he understood neither the one nor the other, that it was the Religious Worship of false and Heathenish Gods, not that of good Angels that was forbad and condemned by both of them, and that those Oratories of *St. Michael* were set up by Catholicks and not by Hereticks, it being then the practice of the Church to Invoke Angels. And now though we might safely venture *Theodore's* Judgment and Credit against *Baronius's*, yet we have no need of his Authority to find out the true meaning of the Text; whoever considers that the Apostle condemns the Worship of Angels in general, and duly weighs the series of his Discourse, will easily apprehend, that it is not levelled against the Heathens who had not yet embraced Christianity, but adher'd to the Worship of their false Gods; but a sort of Judaizing Christians, who retaining still a mighty Veneration for Angels, as the supposed Givers of the Law,

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endeavoured to introduce the Worship of them into the Church of Christ: *Let no man beguile you of your reward ——— in worshipping of Angels, not holding the Head:* The Apostle's Argument to dissuade them from that Worship is, that by doing so, they forsook Christ, which could not have been an Argument to the Heathens, who had never yet believed on him.

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VI. *That the Fathers of the first and purest Ages, till after three hundred, are all exprest and positive in their Writings against it.*

**H**OW fully the Sacred Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, do condemn the Invocation of Saints, you have seen already; now that the Fathers of the purest Ages understood the Scriptures in the same sense as Protestants do, as to this particular, and are also very clear in their Writings against it, will appear from these following Considerations:

1. They generally denied the Doctrine on which this of Saint-Invocation is founded; *viz.* that Saints departed do now reign in Heaven, and enjoy the Beatifick Vision. 'Tis by this blessed priviledge especially, of seeing God, that the *Romanists* ground their belief, that the perfected Spirits of just Men in Heaven come, to see all things in him, to know the Petitions and to be acquainted with the requests of their humble Supplicants; but now the Primitive Fathers have peremptorily affirmed, that the Saints departed are not yet admitted to the sight of God, but are only kept in certain hidden receptacles in the full enjoyment of Peace and Rest, till the general Resurrection: this they have not only asserted in so many words, and

*Iren. l. 5. c. 31.* endeavoured to prove, from our Saviours Soul being in Paradise, which they will not have to be the highest Heaven; but thinking them in a condition not yet fully and compleatly happy, instead of Invocating them, did pray for their farther Bliss and Consummation. So that denying the Foundation, they can't be supposed to grant the Doctrine built upon it. No fewer than Eighteen Fathers, by the *Romanists* own Confession, are of this opinion; and though they should be mistaken, as their great Cardinal thinks they were, and endeavours to prove, yet it's enough to our present purpose, that they did not hold the one, and therefore could neither teach nor practise the other.

*Orig. l. 8. in  
Epif. ad Rom.  
c. 10.  
Athanas. Orat. 4.  
contr. Arria-  
nes.*

2. One chief Argument which the Primitive Fathers used to prove the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost against the *Arrians* and *Macedonians*, was the Catholick practice of the Church in Praying to them; which would not have been of any force, had they believed that any Creatures, though never so highly exalted in Nature and Condition, might have had that Honour payed unto them. They tell us frequently in their Writings, that when the Gospel directs us to invoke the Son and Holy Ghost in conjunction with the Father, it proves them to be true God, that Invocation supposing them every-where to be present when they are invok'd, and that Omnipresence being the sole property of God. For the same reason, when the *Arrians*, who conceived Christ to be no more than an excellent and God-like Creature, did yet pray unto him, the Catholicks accused them of Idolatry. Had the Catholicks at the same time practised the Invocation of Saints, the charge might have been returned with greater force upon themselves, and whatever could have been thought of by the Catholicks to excuse themselves from that guilt, might with more strength have

have been urged by the *Arrians* in their behalf. Had the *Catholicks* replied, as the *Romanists* do now, that though they did pray to the blessed Spirits, yet they did not do it with that Sovereign, direct, and final Prayer, nor with those sublimest Thoughts and Intentions of Honour, wherewith they did address to God; but only with indirect, subaltern, and relative Prayer, and with no higher Intentions of Honour to them, than what is proportioned to the excellencies of their finite nature; the *Arrians* might have returned upon them with great advantage: even after the same manner, Sirs, and with the same due limitations, do we Invoke *the Man Christ Jesus*; and whilst we do no more but so, we have more reason for what we do than you can have, since Christ is confessedly superior to all Creatures, and consequently deserves at least as great an Honour to be paid to him as unto any the highest amongst them; though we do not think him God equal with the Father, yet the Scripture assures us, *he is exalted far above all Angels, Principalities, and Powers, and every name which is named in Heaven and Earth*; and though we may not honour the Son in the same high degree with an *as* of equality as we do the Father, yet the Scripture enjoins us to do it with the same kind of Honour, with an *as* of similitude and likeness: and this is more than can be said in defence of that Honour and Invocation you offer to Saints and Angels.

3. Because the Fathers condemned the Heathens as guilty of Idolatry for Invoking their *Dæmons* or inferior Deities, which in a manner is the same with the *Romish* Invocation of Angels and Saints. This has been invincibly proved against the *Romanists* by a great Light of our Church, who hath made the Parity and Agreement betwixt them to be very obvious; as,

Dean of St. P.  
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Y. In the Object of their Invocation, the Heathens had one Supream God, and a multitude of Inferiour Deities; the *Romanists* have also, besides one God above all, a multitude of Angels and Saints departed. It may be the vulgar and ordinary People might mistake for their Gods, *Jupiter of Crete, Mars, Venus, Vulcan, Bacchus*, persons that had been famous for Lewdness and Adulteries; and if they did, it's to be feared not much better an account can be given of many of the canonized Saints in the Church of *Rome*: but the wiser sort had far different apprehensions of their Deities, they said and believed the same of the Supream God, as Christians do, *That he made the whole World, and sees all things; that he wants neither Power, nor Will, nor Knowledge to make his Providence concerned in the least things; that neither the Actions nor the very Thoughts of mens minds can be hid from him.*

*Plot. Enn. 5.  
l. 9. c. 5.  
Laert. in Vit.  
Thal. p. 24.  
Senec. Ep. 83.*

*Rom. I. 20.*

*Acts 17.*

*St. Aust. de  
Civit. Dei. l. 9.  
c. 23.*

*Apol. de Deo.  
Socr. p. 30. C.  
de leg. l. 2.*

Accordingly we find *St. Paul* affirming of the Heathens, *That they knew God*, ascribing to the Heathens *Jupiter*, the Being the Creator of all things; so he told the *Athenians*, *Him whom ye ignorantly worship, declare I unto you, God that made the World*, and the Being the Father of all Mankind, when he said in the words of one of their Poets, *for we are all his Off-spring*. And then for their Inferiour Deities, there is so very little disparity betwixt them and the Angels and Saints Invoked by the Church of *Rome*, that it seems to be only in name. Accordingly *Saint Austin* confest, that the *Platonists* did affirm the same things of their good *Dæmons*, as Christians did of the blessed Angels; did they distinguish their Inferiour Deities into such Spirits as were by Death delivered from the Body, and such as never had any, into such as always lived in Heaven, and such whose merits had advanced them thither; how exactly doth this suite with the difference given

given by *Romanists* betwixt Angels and Saints departed, and the reason of their Worshipping of them, *The Spiritual and Heavenly Nature of the one, and the Merits of the other?*

2. In the Office ascribed to them. The employment the Heathens put upon their *Dæmons*, was to carry up the Prayers of Men to God; and what they had obtained, to bring back to Men; imagining the Supreme God to be of too pure and sublime a nature, immediately to converse with Men, they lookt upon these as Advocates and Mediators betwixt God and Men, and as Intercessors and Procurers of their desired Blessings; and is not this the same thing the Church of *Rome* says, touching the Office of Angels and blessed Spirits in the behalf of Men, such as do sollicite God for them, and by their more prevailing Merits and Interest in God, obtain of him what they themselves pray for?

*Aug. de Civ.  
Dei. l. 8. c. 18.*

3. In that which they make the Foundation of their Worship and Invocation to them, *viz.* a middle sort of Excellency betwixt God and Men; so said the Heathens, that there were a sort of Beings between God and Men that participated of both Natures, and that by means of those intermediate Beings an intercourse was maintained betwixt Heaven and Earth; and as God was to be Worshipt for himself, so the others, to be Loved and Honoured for his sake, as being Gods by way of participation, as likest to him, as his Vicars, and as Reconcilers betwixt them: And is not this the declared reason why the Church of *Rome* gives Religious Worship to Angels and departed Saints, *Because of a middle sort of worth and excellency that is in them, that's neither infinite as the Divine, nor so low as the Humane; but Spiritual and Supernatural, whereby approaching near to the Divinity, they have great interest in the Court of Heaven, and ought, as Celsus said of their*

*Dæmons,*

*Demons*, to be prayed unto to be favourable and propitious to us. So exact you see is the Parallel betwixt them. Now against this *Demon-Worship* the Fathers replied, that whatever great and supernatural Excellencies were to be found in the Spirits above, ought indeed to have an Acknowledgement and Honour paid to them both in Mind and Action, proportioned and commensurate to such Excellencies; but yet they were not to be esteemed inwardly as Gods, nor to be worshipt with any outward Act of Religious Worship, be it erecting Altars, making Vows, or putting up Prayers to them, as if they were such: For all and every part of that was solely due to God, and not to be given to any the highest created Excellency. As you may see their minds more fully in the next particular.

4. The Fathers positively assert, that none but God ought to be Invoked.

Ign. Ep. ad  
Philadelph.

And the first I shall mention is that advice which *Ignatius* gave the Virgins of his time, not to direct their Prayers and Supplications to any, but only to the Blessed Trinity. *Oh ye Virgins, have Christ alone before your Eyes, and his Father in your Prayers, being inlightned by the Spirit.*

*Irenæus* in his First Book taking notice of some persons, who had entertained strange fancies concerning the Power of Angels, and accordingly gave Divine Worship to them, tells us plainly, that the Doctrine and Practice of the Church in his days was far otherwise, and *that throughout the World, it did nothing by Invocation of Angels, nor by Incantations, but purely and manifestly directs her Prayers to God who made all, and calls upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* *Feuardentius* in his Notes upon the place, would have the words of the Father to be understood only of Prayers made by  
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Evil Men to Evil Spirits and Angels; but then why did not the Father express it so? Why does he exclude all Angels, without distinction, from Divine Worship, when he says, *The whole Church every where called only upon God and his Son Christ Jesus.*

*Eusebius* in his History hath set down a long Prayer of the Holy Martyr *Polycarp*, which he uttered at the time of his suffering, wherein there is not any one Petition put up to Saints, but every one directed to God through the Mediation of Christ, closing his Prayer with this Doxology; *Therefore in all things I Praise thee, I Bless thee, I Glorifie thee through the Eternal Priest Jesus Christ thy beloved Son, to whom with thee, Oh Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Glory now and for ever.* *Euseb. l. 4. c. 15.*

To which we may add, what also is recorded by the same Author, that when the Church of *Smyrna* desired the Body of their Martyred Bishop to give it an Honourable Interment, and was denied it by the Governour, upon the unworthy suggestion of the *Jews*, that they would Worship it, they thus replied: *We can never be induced to Worship any other but Christ, him being the Son of God we adore; others, as Martyrs and his sincere Disciples, we worthily love and respect.* And that which here deserves a particular observation, is what the Learned Primate of *Armah* hath pointed out to us, viz. that what in the Original Greek is *σεβειν*, *Ex passion.* Religiously to Worship, is in the Latin Edition that was *M. S. 7. Kalendar. Febr. in Bib. Eccl. Sarisb. & Dom. Rob. Cotton.* wont to be read in all the Churches of the West, rendered *precem orationis impendere, to impart the Supplication of Prayer.*

The next Testimony I shall produce, is that of *Origen*, who is very full to this purpose; in his Writings against *Celsus*, he tells us, *We must endeavour to please God alone, and labour to have him propitious to us, procur-*

ring his good will with Godlineſſ, and all kind of Virtue ; and if Celsus will have us to procure the good will of any others after him that is God over all, let him conſider, that as when the Body is moved, the motions of the ſhadow thereof doth follow it ; ſo in like manner, having God favourable to us, who is over all, it followeth, that we ſhall have all his Friends, both Angels and Spirits, loving to us : And whereas Celsus had ſaid of the Angels, that they belong to God, and in that reſpect were to be Prayed unto, that they may be favourable to us, he thus ſharply replies ; *Away with Celsus's Counſel, ſaying that we muſt Pray to Angels, for we muſt Pray to him who is God over all, and we muſt Pray to the Word of God, his only begotten Son, and the firſt born of all Creatures, and we muſt intreat him, that he as High-Prieſt would preſent our Prayer unto his God and our God.* And when Celsus objected that the Chriſtians did not keep to their own Rule of Praying to, and Worſhipping none but God, ſince they gave the ſame Honour to Chriſt, whom they knew to be a Man ; he replies, *That Chriſt was God as well as Man, one with the Father,* and proves it from Miracles, and Propheſies, and Precepts, that this Honour was given to him to be Worſhipt as they Worſhipt the Father.

Had Celsus objected, that the Chriſtians Worſhipt Angels and Saints departed, it had been laid right, and would have born hard upon them, and he had inferred ſtrongly, that they might as well Worſhip their Inferiour Deities ; but Celsus objects no ſuch thing, (but only their Worſhipping of Chriſt, which Origen was well provided to answer ; ) and this is an evident Proof that the Chriſtians were not guilty of it. Had there been but the leaſt ground to ſuſpect them for it, it would have been ſo hugely ſerviceable to his Cauſe, and with ſo much force have rebounded back  
upon

upon the Christians, that it's not to be imagined so industrious and spiteful an Adversary as *Celsus*, would have omitted, with the greatest Insult and Triumph, to have laid it at their Door.

To these we might add the Suffrages of many more, *St. Cyprian*, who have written set Treatises of Prayer, teaching us to regulate all our Prayers after that most perfect Pattern of our Lords, and ever to direct our Petitions to our Heavenly Father only.

*Gregory Nyssen* saith, we are taught to Worship and Adore that Nature only that's uncreated.

*ἀκτιστος οὐρανός*  
Cont. Eunom.  
Tom. 2. Orat. 4.  
Orat. 3. Contr.  
Arrian.

*Athanasius*, That God only is to be Worshipped, that the Creature is not to Adore the Creature.

*St. Austin* says expressly, That the Saints are to be Honoured for imitation, not to be Adored for Religion; that at the Communion-Table they were named, but not Invoked. And again, you see the Head of the most renowned Empire stooping with his Diadem, and Praying at the Sepulchre of Peter the Fisher-man, namely, it's to God himself that he Prays, though at the Tomb of Peter.

De ver. Relig.  
c. 55. de Civit.  
Dei. l. 22. c. 10.  
Ep. 42.

*Epiphanius* reproveth, as he calls it, the Womens Heresie, who were wont to offer up a Cake to the Blessed Virgin, hath these words: Let Mary be in Honour, but let the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be Worshipped. And to shew us what a very ill opinion he had of that at least superstitious Practice, he six times repeats in that Tract, *Μακάρι μὴδεὶς προσκυνεῖτω*, Let no Man Adore Mary.

Heret. 79. ad-  
ver. Collyridi-  
an.

To name no more; *Tertullian* in his Apology for the Christians, thus expresses himself, after he had set down the many great Blessings the Christians thought themselves ever obliged to beg for their Emperours: As long Life, and Valiant Arms, and a Faithful Senate, and Loyal Subjects, and a peaceable Reign; these things,

Apol. c. 31.  
30. 2, 3.



saith he, *I may not pray for from any other but from him, of whom I know I shall obtain them, because both it is he who is alone able to give, and I am he to whom it appertains to obtain that which is requested, being his Servant who observe him alone.*

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VII. *That the Doctrine and Practice of Saint-Invocation is Impious and Idolatrous.*

**T**His, I think, will be fully made out from these three particulars.

I. This ascribes to Angels and Saints the Attributes and Perfections that are solely proper and peculiar to God, *viz. his Omniscience and Omnipresence* ; for, not only, when Mental Prayers, as the Church of *Rome* directs, but (since the blessed Spirits above can't be supposed to espouse the Cause of an insincere Votary) when vocal Prayers also are offered up to them, it supposes them privy to the very thoughts, and acquainted with the Hearts of Men ; again, when innumerable Prayers and Supplications from millions of places at the greatest distance from one another, are at the same time immediately put up to them, it supposes in like manner, that they are present in all places, and at the same time can give Audience to all their Petitioners. Now what more or greater can be said of God ? Is not this that infinite Knowledge, that Omnipresent Power, and never absent Nature that the Scriptures solely attribute to the Creator of all things, and have denied to any of the highest Form of the Creatures ? And although I will not undertake to describe to you the exact bounds and measures of the Angelical Nature and Perfections, how perspective their Knowledge is, how piercing their Understanding, how swift their

their Motion ; yet, sure I am, that neither they nor any other the most elevated part of Gods Creation, can by their own natural Power know the Hearts of Men, and be in all places at one instant of time. It is God alone whose Understanding is infinite, who looks down from Heaven, and beholds all the ways of the Sons of Men ; *He, even he knoweth all the Hearts of the Children of Men. 'Tis he that seeth in secret.* And God challenges it as a peculiar to himself ; *The Heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it ? I the Lord search the Heart, and try the Reins.* By this Argument the Fathers triumph over the *Arrians* and *Macedonians*, in proving the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost ; which yet would have been no Argument at all, had not this Knowledge been an Incommunicable Perfection in the Divine Nature.

1 King. 8. 27.

Mat. 6. 4.

Jer. 17. 9, 10.

But it's said, that it's God indeed that only *naturally, and of himself*, knows the Hearts of Men ; but this hinders not, but that others, his Saints and Angels may know them by Communication from him, *viz.* either by Revelation from God, or by the Beatifick Vision, *Seeing all things in God who sees all things.*

In answer to this, not to mention how it contradicts the exprefs words of Scripture, which, without any distinction or limitation, does as plainly assert as words can do it, *That God only knows the Heart* ; not to mention the many Disputes the *Romanists* have among themselves which way is to be chosen as the most probable, and after what manner in either way this Knowledge is derived and past from God to them ; these things may be said,

1. That God hath no-where declared that he hath Communicated this Priviledge and Prerogative of his Nature to Saints and Angels, or that he does any way make visible or known to them the Hearts and the

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Requests of Men ; and now, *if what is not of Faith is Sin*, we having no Text of Scripture to build our Faith upon in this particular, must of necessity sin in Praying to them on that supposition, and commit that very sin too, which we doubt whether we so doing, commit or no ; nay, the silence of the Scripture in this particular, has in a manner determined the point, and we may conclude, that the most jealous God has reserved the Honour of Invocation to himself alone, since he has nowhere given us the least hint or intimation of leave, to Pray to them.

2. We are informed in Scripture, that the Saints departed do not particularly know or mind what's done here below : *God tells Josiah, Thou shalt be gathered to thy Grave in Peace, neither shall thine Eyes see the Evil I will bring upon this place. The Dead know not any thing*, that is, of the Affairs of this World, saith the Preacher. *His Sons come to Honour, and he knoweth it not ; and they are brought low, and he perceiveth it not of them*, says *Job*, of Man in the other State. When *Elijah* was about to be taken up into Heaven, he thus spake to *Elisba* : *Ask what thou wilt, before I am taken from thee*. Strongly implying, that when he was once gone, 'twas in vain to ask any think of him. *Elijah* was immediately taken up into Heaven, made no stay by the way *in Limbo*, as the *Romanists* themselves agree ; being in Heaven, his Love to *Elisba* could not be forgot, nor his Interest in God lessened, but rather both by being exalted thither, very much increased and augmented : so that no reason can be given why he should limit and fix his making his desires known to him to the time of his abode with him on Earth, but only this, his Perswasion that in the other State he should not be capable to hear his Request, and so all his future Addresses to him would be ineffectual. To

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these we may add that known place in *Isaiah*, *Abraham* *Isai. 63. 16.*  
*doth not know us, and Israel is ignorant of us :* from  
 whence *St. Austin* concludes, *That if those great Men* *St. Aust. de cu-*  
*and Founders of their Nation, were ignorant of what was* *ra pro morte.*  
*done in after-Ages to their Posterity, why should the Dead* *c. 13.*  
*be thought in a condition to know or help their surviving*  
*Friends in what they do.*

3. They that will have God acquaint particular Saints and Angels with those Petitions that are put up to them, impose a very servile and dishonourable Office on God ; and as sometimes they will have us, out of discretion and humility go to God by Saints and Angels, as Men make their way to a Prince by his Favourites ; now they make the King and his Subjects to change places, and God is sent to wait on them with the Requests of their Votaries. What can be more strangely ridiculous, than this Position of theirs ? That the Petitioners must first make his sute to Angels and Saints, then God must tell those Angels and Saints both the Person that Prays, and the Boon he Prays for, then the Angels or Saints must back again and present them to God. Or, when any one addresses to an Angel or Saint, to supplicate the Blessed Virgin in his behalf, God must first tell this Angel or Saint the Contents of the Address, then he must Post to the Blessed Virgin, she upon the first notice of it must have recourse to her Son, and he upon the motion of his Mother, repair to his Father, to present that Request to him which he himself first revealed. But is not this an insufferable affront to God, and an intollerable abuse of themselves, to send the most high God on the Errands of his Creatures, and to apply themselves to broken Cisterns, when they may directly go to the Fountain itself of all Blessings ?

4. Neither.

4. Neither can the Angels and Spirits above, know the Hearts and Petitions of their Supplicants any more by vertue of the sight of God, than by Revelation from him ; this fond Opinion depends upon this *Romish* Gingle, *That seeing God they must in him see all things* that in *Idea* are contained in him : But does not the Scripture assure us, *That no one knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God that is in him* ? Do they not tell us, how ignorant the Angels were of the great Mystery of Mans Redemption, notwithstanding their nearness to God, and beholding his Face, *Till it was made known to them by the Church*. Does not our Saviour let us know that he himself, as Man, though his Humanity was Hypostatically united to the Divinity, did not pretend to know all the Councils and Purposes of God ? Speaking of the day of Judgment, he says, *Of that day and hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels, but the Father only*. Why then should it be thought credible that the Blessed Spirits above, by beholding Gods Face, do in that Glasse of the Divinity see all things and transactions that are done, and hear all Prayers and Petitions that are made by the Sons of Men ?

1 Cor. 2. 11.

Eph. 3. 10.

1 Pet. 1. 12.

Mat. 24. 36.

2. This Doctrine and Practice is highly derogatory from the Glory of God, as Governour of the World. God is the great Lord of Heaven and Earth ; all that we are, and all that we have, we derive from him ; we are upheld by his Power, and maintained by his Bounty and Goodness ; *In him we live, and move, and have our being ; he gives to all, life and breath, and all things* ; he numbers the Hairs of our Head, paints the Lillies of the Field beyond the Glory of *Solomon*, feeds the young Ravens that call upon him, takes care of Sparrows, much more of Man, who is of a more worthy and excellent Nature, much more yet of Nations and Kingdoms, who consist of multitudes of Men linkt together

gether by Laws and Government ; and, though sometimes when he pleases, he makes use of the Ministry of Angels, and makes them the Instruments of his Providence towards the Sons of Men, yet he has no-where told us, that he hath divided to them, much less to Saints departed, their several Provinces, or set them their particular tasks, that he has made them Presidents over such Countries or Cities, Patrons and Guardians over such Persons or professions, that he has given them a Power over such and such Maladies and Diseases ; but, has reserved the Power of dispensing his Kindnesses where, to whom, and in what measure, in his own hands ; and therefore all our trust and confidence ought intirely to be placed in God, all our Thanks and Praises are due to him, and he alone is to be acknowledged as the Author and Donor of all our Blessings ; but now from that Presidentship and Protection, that Power and Patronage, that the *Romanists intruding into those* Col. 2. 18. *things they have not seen*, without sufficient ground, ascribe to Angels and Saints, over particular Kingdoms, Persons, and in particular Cases and Circumstances, ( though as Substitutes under God ) arises naturally some degree of trust and confidence in them, some debt of Homage and Praise to them, and it's well if the person obliged looks any higher in his returns of Love and Thankfulness, than to that particular Angel or Saint he prayed to, and from whose deputed Power and Authority he thinks he received his deliverance ; and what is this but to rob God of the Honour of being sole Governour of the World, and to make some of his Creatures who are no less beholding to him for their subsistence, than the rest, to partake with him of that Trust and Affection, that Homage and Subjection, that is wholly due to him from all his Creatures ? What is this, as our Church in her Homily expresses

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it,



*Jer. 17. 5, 7. it, But a turning from the Creator to the Creature? Cursed is Man that trusteth in Man, says the Prophet, and for the same reason in any Finite and Created Being, because in what degree he does so, in the same does his Heart depart from God; but blessed is the Man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.*

What low and mean conceptions of God have those Men, who think his Government of the World must be modelled and conformed to a Princes Government over his Kingdom; and because, he being but a Man, and so not able in person to hear all Complaints, and redress all Grievances, appoints Substitutes under him, Judges and Magistrates to do it, therefore God must do so too; whereas there is an infinitely wider distance betwixt the Wisdom, and Knowledge, and Goodness, and Power of God, and those of the most accomplished Governour, than there is betwixt the height of Heaven and the lowest centre of the Earth; *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, for as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* The wisest Monarch on Earth falls infinitely short of the Perfections of God, his Knowledge is but short, his Power small, and therefore cannot possibly, without the information and assistance of others, extend the influences of his Government over all his Subjects; did he not make use of more Eyes and more Hands than his own, the Complaints of some would be altogether neglected, and the cause of others not rightly judged, his mistakes would be innumerable, and his Wings too short to cherish and foster, to shelter and cover every corner of his Realm: But could he act with that plenitude of Wisdom, and Knowledge, and Power, that is in God, all then might have access to his Person, either immediately, or by his

his Son , that is of like Nature and Power with him , and no Man fear the being sent back unheard, or the having his Cause mis-judged , the not having Justice done him, or Mercy in a compassionate case with-held from him ; Gods Wisdom is never wearied with seeing, nor his Power tired with acting in the World, supposing the affairs of the World to be infinite, which they are not, yet God is infinite too, and now an infinite God can with as much ease manage and govern an infinite number of Affairs, as one Wise Man can prudently manage one Affair, Infinite bearing the same proportion to Infinite, as one does to one.

The same fancy likewise of making the Court of Heaven resemble Princes Courts on Earth, hath brought forth that Excuse in the *Romish* Supplicants, that it's out of an humble sense of their own Unworthiness, and an awful regard to the Infinite Majesty of God, that they address to him, as Earthly Subjects to their King, not immediately to himself, but by the Mediation of Angels and Saints, those Courtiers and Favourites of Heaven. But what Wise Man on Earth, who is abundantly satisfied of the readiness and ability of his Prince to help him, and hath free leave given him on any occasion to come, immediately or by his Son, to him, will chuse to wave this freedom of access, and apply himself to some inferiour Officer and Favourite, ( of whose Power and Interest he is not so well assured ) either to relieve him himself, or to procure relief of the King for him ? This is our Case, God is of infinite Wisdom, Goodness and Power, every way able on all occasions to afford sutable aids and supplies to the wants of his Creatures, hath not only allowed, but commanded all *to call upon him in the day of trouble, to pour out their complaints to him, hath over and over promised to hear*

In Rom. I. 21.

their Prayers, and to answer them, hath appointed his own Son, God with himself, the Master of Requests, from time to time to receive all the Petitions of his Subjects, and both the one and the other are infinitely more able, and infinitely more willing to hear and succour them, than the Best and Wisest and most Powerful of all Created Beings; and shall we now be afraid to take the liberty that God hath given us? Shall we call that Impudence, which God hath made our Duty? Whilst we pretend Humility, shall we forfeit our Allegiance? and distrust his Promises, and suspect the Goodness of his Nature, for fear of being too sawcy and too bold with his Person? To this pretence of voluntary Humility, the Fathers long since, particularly St. Ambrose and St. Chrysostom, gave a satisfactory answer; St. Ambrose, or whoever was the Author of those Commentaries that go under his name, observing that the Heathens used the same Apology for going to their Gods by their inferiour Deities, as the Romanists do now for their addressing to God by Saints and Angels, namely, *As Men go to the King by his Courtiers, out of Humility and a deep sense of the infinite distance betwixt God and them*, calls it a miserable excuse, and adds, *is any Man so mad and regardless of himself, to give the Honour due to the King, to any of his Courtiers, which if a Man does, he's condemned of Treason? And yet they think themselves not guilty, who give the Honour due to God's Name, to a Creature, and forsaking God, Adore their Fellow-Servants, as though anything greater than that, were reserved for God himself. But therefore we go to a King by his Officers and Servants, because the King is but a Man, who knows not of himself whom to employ in his publick affairs (without information from others.) But with God it is otherwise, for nothing is hid from him, he knows the secrets of every*

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one, and therefore we need no Spokes-man but a Devout mind, for whensoever such an one shall speak to him, he will answer him. St. Chrysostom also often to the same purpose, denies the way of our coming to God to be like the manner of Kings Courts; *When thou hast need, saith he, to sue unto a King, thou art forced first to apply to his favourites and go a great way about; but with God there is no such thing, he is intreated without an Intercessor, it sufficeth onely, that thou cry in thine Heart, and bring tears with thee, and entring in straightway, thou mayest draw him unto thee: And for example hereof, he sets before us the Woman of Canaan; She entreated not James, she beseeched not John, neither did she go to Peter, but brake through the Crowd to Christ himself, saying, I have no need of a Mediator, but taking Repentance with me to recommend me, I come to the Fountain it self; for this cause did he descend, for this cause did he take Flesh, that I might have the boldness to speak unto him; I have no need of a Mediator, have thou Mercy upon me.*

St. Chry. Sermon  
7. of Repen-  
tance. Sermon in  
Psal. 4. p. 324.  
p. 802.

3. It's highly injurious to the Honour of Christ, as the only Mediator God has appointed betwixt God and Man. God, as the Reward of the unspotted Innocency of his Life, and perfect Obedience of his Death, exalted him to the right hand of Majesty and Glory, bestowed a mediatorious Kingdom on him, invested him with all Power in Heaven and Earth, and gave him Authority to receive and answer the Prayers of his People. *Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a Tree, Acts 2. him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that that same Acts 5. Jesus whom ye Crucified, God hath made both Lord and Christ. He humbled himself, and became obedient unto the Death, even the Death of the Cross, wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every*

Phil. 2. 9.

every name, that at the name of Jesus every Knee should bow, and every Tongue confess that Jesus is the Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. So that now to make more Mediators than Christ, is not onely to undervalue his all-sufficient Merits, to distrust his never-failing Interest and Power with God, but also to invade that Honour and Royalty that God hath conferred on him alone; by giving to Angels and Saints the same Power, they give them the same Honour too, and Christ is robbed of both, whilst others are made to divide with him. But to which of the Angels or Saints departed, said God at any time, *Sit thou on my right hand to make intercession for Men?* Of which of them has he at any time affirmed, as he has done of Christ, *He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come to God by him, seeing he ever lives to make Intercession for men?* *That if any Man sin, he is an Advocate with the Father for him?* Or whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in his Name, it shall be given you? Certainly, they who will have Angels and Saints Mediators betwixt God and Men, ought to produce a Commission signed by God or his Son Jesus, to constitute them such; but this they are no more able to do, than they are to make a grant of such Power and Honour themselves to them. It's true, the blessed Spirits above are said to stand about the Throne of God, and the Holy Angels to behold his Face; and as the Honour of a Prince is increased by the number of his Attendants, so is our Lords exaltation rendered the more Glorious by those ten thousand times ten thousand that Minister unto him; but yet it's never said, *They sit at Gods right hand, or live for ever to make Intercession for us;* and having no such delegation of Power from God for this Office, the Honour and Worship that belongs to it, can't be given to them, without manifest Wrong and Sacriledge to Christ, who

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has ? The Holy Angels are Gods Ministring Spirits, and the Spirits of Just Men departed, his Glorified Saints; but God hath made *Jesus only Lord and Christ, and put all things in Heaven and Earth in subjection under his feet*: of him only hath he said, *Let all the Angels Honour him, and let all the Saints fall down before him, and all Men Honour the Son even as they Honour the Father.* Amen. John 5. 23.

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### To Conclude,

**W**ERE we certain that the Saints departed do now reign in Heaven and enjoy the Beatifick Vision, and that it was lawful to Invoke such as are undoubtedly Saints, as the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Apostles; yet, methinks, a wary Man should be shy, and not over-forward to exhibit that Honor to all whom the Pope hath Canoniz'd: I cannot for my heart but think, that the Prelates and Bishops in King *Henry* the Eighth's time had as much reason to Unsaint *Thomas Becket* for being a Rebel against his Prince, as Pope *Alexander* the Third had to Canonize him for being a Biggot for the Church. What can a sober Christian think of the Saintship of some, who never had any being in the World, and of others who never had any goodness; many of their Saints are meer Names, without Persons, and many meer Persons, without Holiness; nay, I am very confident that the greatest Incendiaries and Disturbers of the Peace of the World do as well deserve it as that famous Pope *Hildebrand*, or *Gregory* the Seventh. Innumerable might be instanc'd in, whose Saintship justly falls under great suspicion; but,



*Beilar. de beat.  
Sanct. l. 1.  
c. 7. 8.*

but, it's enough that some *Romanists* themselves, and those of no little Authority in their Church, have granted, *That the Popes Canonizations are doubtful, and subject to error.* If then at any time his Infallibility should chance to mistake, as I am pretty sure he has more than once done, the Members of that Church are in a sweet case, and are not only in danger of Invoking Saints, but Devils also, which is Idolatry with a witness, and by their own Confession.

To Conclude

**FINIS.**